

REGIS COLLEGE LIBRARY



3 1761 05807116 8

SISTER GERTRUDE MARY

A MYSTIC
OF OUR OWN DAYS



CANADIAN MESSENGER
LIBRARY

Section

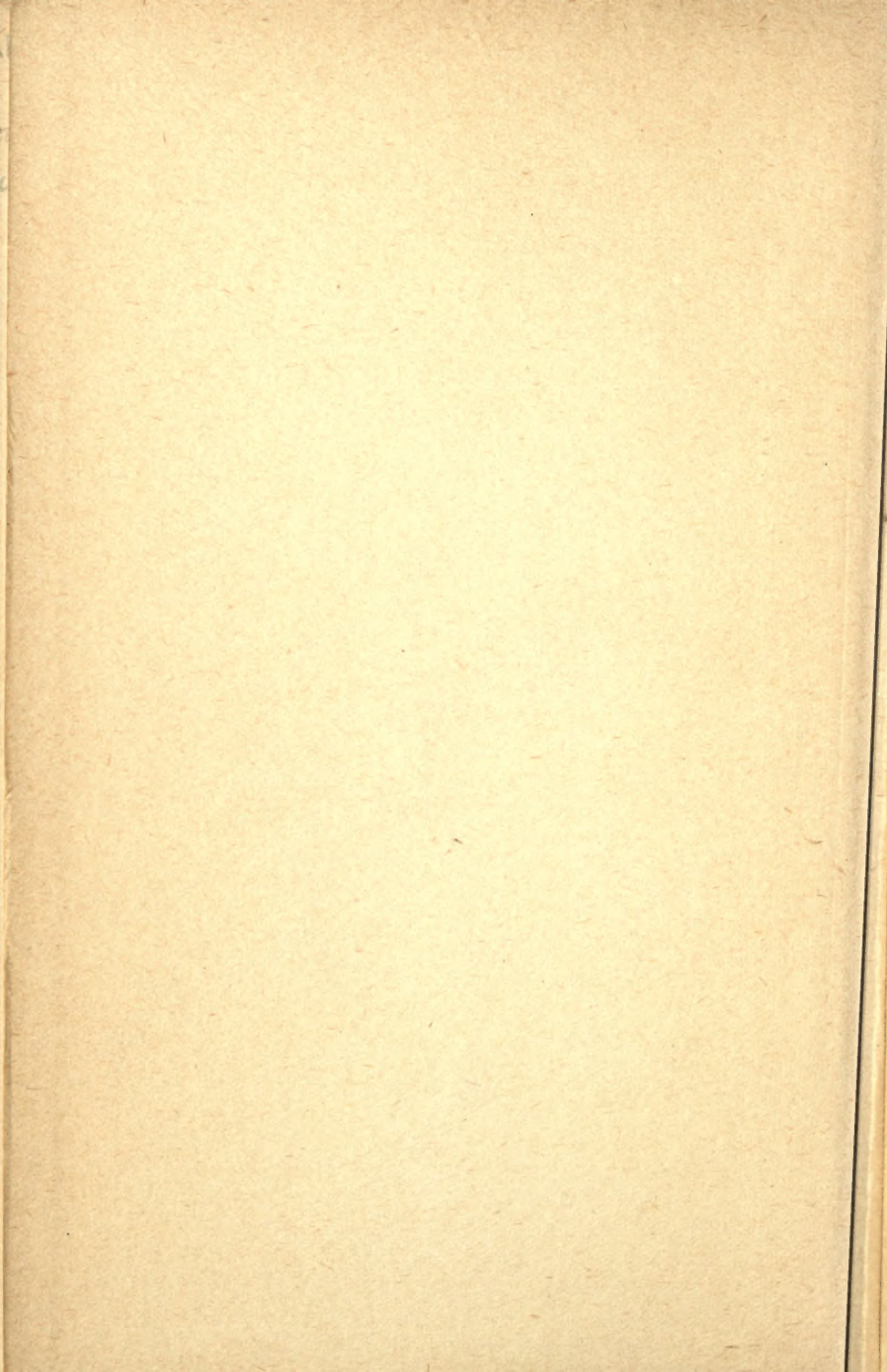
Number 304



BDT 6264

2/
REGIS
BIBL. MAJ.
COLLEGE

*Office
Index*



SISTER GERTRUDE MARY

Nil Obstat.

F. THOMAS BERGH, O.S.B.,

CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

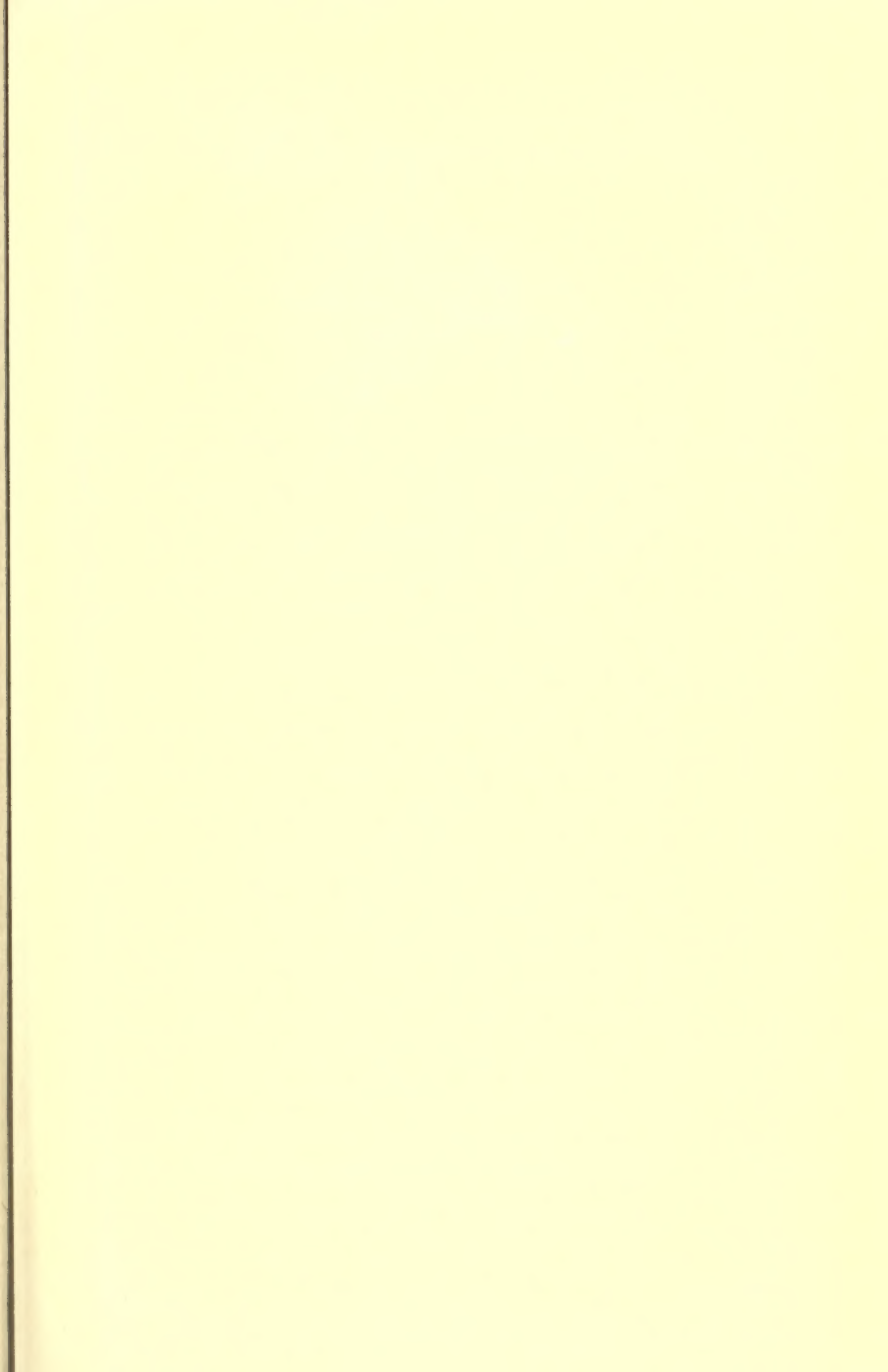
Imprimatur.

EDM. CAN. SURMONT,

VICARIUS GENERALIS.

WESTMONASTERII,

Die 19 Januarii, 1915.





SISTER GERTRUDE MARY ON THE DAY AFTER HER CLOTHING.

SISTER GERTRUDE MARY

“A MYSTIC OF OUR OWN DAYS”

(THE SISTER OF THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT
CHARLES, ANGERS, WHO FORETOLD THE CON-
VERSIONS OF CALDEY AND SAINT BRIDE'S)

EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARY

FROM THE FRENCH OF

CANON STANISLAS LEGUEU

CHAPLAIN TO THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT CHARLES
(*Les Tendresses Divines*)

TRANSLATED BY

A NUN OF SAINT BRIDE'S ABBEY

WITH A PREFACE BY

DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

REGIS

BIBL. MAJ.

COLLEGE/

R. & T. WASHBOURNE, LTD.

PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

AND AT MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, AND GLASGOW

1915

All rights reserved

13X
4705
B3-
L4
1915
62975

EDITOR'S PREFACE

ON introducing this little book to the public, I feel that I cannot do better, by way of a Preface, than reproduce a paper read by me before the Fourth National Catholic Congress at Plymouth on July 7, 1913.* The visions of which I give the account do not, it is true, appear in the smaller work by Canon Legueu, of which this work is the translation ; but it is to be hoped that these extracts from the diary of Sister Gertrude Mary will induce Catholics to desire better acquaintance with her, and to become possessors of the more complete work, "*Une Mystique de nos Jours*," which is her diary in full, and contains many other revelations, besides these which must be, for English Catholics, of great interest, as directly concerning their country :

* "Everyone has heard a good deal about

Caldey lately, and perhaps it may be wondered what more there can be to say.

“ But having been asked to read a paper on this subject before the Guild of Ransom at the Catholic Congress, I thought it might be appropriate if I gave some idea of the various causes that may have led to the conversion of the Community of Caldey and to that of the sister-Community of St. Bride’s. And I hope that I may be excused if I venture to mention my own share in the work, on account of circumstances which may possibly be useful to others who are specially interested, as all Ransomers must be, in the work of the conversion of our separated brethren.

“ We know that a conversion to the true faith is the work of God the Holy Spirit, and of Him alone, and we are deeply interested in tracing His Divine action in these miracles of His grace. We know too that He often uses very miserable instruments to work out His gracious purposes, and above all we are profoundly convinced that prayer and prayer alone can move the Heart of God to work His wonders in a soul. It is for this reason that Ransomers are banded together to pray

and work, but, above all and before all, to pray for the conversion of England.

“ We shall not, therefore, be surprised, if we find we can trace the power of prayer in conversions so remarkable as those with which we are dealing, and that in an eminent degree. God has His own mysterious ways of working, and we can only catch glimpses of them from time to time. Here is one such instance. When the news of the conversions at Caldey and St. Bride’s first became known to the world, I received a very remarkable letter from an English nun in France. She wrote from the Mother House of the Congregation of St. Charles at Angers. I will quote her letter at length :

“ ‘ A Sister of our community, who died May 24, 1908, and whose autobiography was published in 1910, and has now reached the third edition and fifth thousand, and is in all parts of the world, so to speak, said in her writings some things which bear such a striking resemblance with the events that gladden the Catholic world at the present time, that I cannot resist calling your attention to them.*

* The life referred to is “ Une Mystique de nos Jours,” par M. le Chanoine Legueu.

““For instance, on January 2, 1907, she writes: “The demon is enraged because God chooses for Himself a multitude of souls in whom He is about to work marvellous things. The Adorable Trinity will have, so to speak, His Heaven on the earth. I rejoice at the reign of God in these souls, and I pray for them. I beg the Divine Master to increase their number.

“““For some time since, I see a community of religious women all clothed in white. Our Lord finds His delight among these consecrated souls. They have always their souls, if not their arms, raised to Heaven. Their thoughts are constantly fixed on God. Their prayers, which ever rise towards the Eternal God, are very fervent, and appease His wrath. They appear to me to be about forty in number.”’

“I will break off the letter here to remark that the nuns of St. Bride’s wore a white habit, like the monks of Caldey, though this is very unusual among Benedictines. They numbered too, about forty—thirty-seven to be exact.

“Again, on January 11, 1907, she writes: ‘At my repeated prayers, Jesus turned His

face each time to this poor land, this poor France of ours, but His face became ever more sad, as if ever more oppressed with grief.

“ ‘At the same time, I saw a little island, surrounded by water on every side. The soil was uncultivated. In the midst of the island there grew a beautiful rose on a long stem without leaves. I was much astonished. A rose at this season? A rose on a leafless stem, in this rough uncultivated soil? I could not understand what it meant.

“ ‘This morning, during Mass, when I was not thinking about it at all, our Lord said to me, that this uncultivated soil meant that religion was not yet properly established in this place, which yet was to be the heaven of the Holy Trinity on earth, and from which Saints would arise to console the Heart of God. Already I knew interiorly that this world of chosen souls was not in France. Our Lord then commanded me to take His precious Blood which I had seen flow abundantly from Him, and to water therewith this barren soil which would then become fruitful.’

“ Again, on January 16, 1907, she saw an abundant shower of rain fall on this island,

which was thus wonderfully predestined to be God's heaven on earth, and she was told that these were graces, which, rejected and despised by others, were now poured out on this chosen land. Under this abundant rain she saw the soil become soft and moist, as souls emerging from their state of ignorance were thus prepared to bud and bring forth fruit.

“‘I have no idea,’ the writer continues, ‘if the good nuns of Milford Haven wear black or white. Then again, I have never been to Caldey, so cannot know if the facts coincide in reality, as they appear to us to do. A line from you, Rev. Father, would be esteemed a great favour, for we have often wondered where the unknown island was, and also the nuns clothed in white.’

“Of course, I wrote to assure her that the facts did, indeed, wonderfully coincide with the Sister's revelations. It was in October, 1906, that the monks came to Caldey, and already in January, 1907, this holy nun had visions of this chosen isle, once the home of so many Saints, but for more than three centuries utterly abandoned and neglected as far as religion was concerned.

“I asked for more information about the nun to whom our Lord seems to have entrusted the work of these conversions, and the Mother-General kindly sent me copies of her autobiography, entitled ‘Une Mystique de nos Jours.’

“Sister Gertrude Marie Bernier was born of a poor family at Lion d’Angers in Anjou, in 1870. She became a religious in 1887, and spent most of her short life in teaching little children. She suffered greatly, and after years of severe illness, died in the odour of sanctity at Angers, in 1908. Our Lord Himself commanded her to write her life, and tell of the marvels of grace which He was pleased to work in her soul.

“From the day of her First Communion she was inundated with Divine favours, which reached their apogee when, in 1907, she celebrated her mystic nuptials with her Divine Spouse. With these graces were united, as is usually the case, the most terrible sufferings, for she had offered herself to Jesus to be His victim. Her favourite device was, ‘Love has chosen me, Love has called me, I yield myself up to Love by love.’

“ And if we rejoice to-day at these wonderful conversions, at the sight of two communities with one consent and one heart begging for admission into the Church of Jesus Christ, we may find the secret, it seems, of these extraordinary graces, in the hidden life of prayer and immolation of this poor nun whom Jesus chose to be His instrument in the Divine work.

“ She did not live to know who it was for whom she thus poured out her supplications, she never knew the joy, at least in this world, of seeing her petitions so wonderfully granted. But no doubt these conversions are *mainly* due to her sacrifices and her prayers.

“ Other causes there doubtless were, and other instruments employed by Divine Providence in the work.

“ We know that for a long time many Catholics throughout England were praying for these communities, and these prayers had doubtless their share in the happy result.

“ I may now speak of what came under my own knowledge. In the year 1891, a dear friend of my own, Miss Charlotte Boyd, Foundress of the Orphanage of the Infant Saviour at Kilburn, came to see me, during

my novitiate at the Benedictine Abbey at Maredsous.

“She was a devout Anglican, and, from her early days, had been intensely interested in the revival of the monastic life in England. Possessed of considerable means, she had been moved, when on a pilgrimage to the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, to make a special vow that she would devote her life and the bulk of her fortune to rescuing from desecration the holy sites once consecrated to God and St. Benedict, and to restoring them to religious uses.

“Unfortunately, having been brought up in the belief that the Anglican Communion was the true representative of the ancient Catholic Church of the land, she handed over her benefactions to members of the High Church party, and made the Cowley Fathers trustees of the fund which she designated ‘The Abbey Restoration Trust.’

“God, however, did not fail to reward her zeal and devotion, by enlightening her as to His true Church. Her visits to Maredsous greatly impressed her, and she began to see that submission to the Holy See was a neces-

sary condition of true Catholicism. While still hesitating, she acquired Malling Abbey, a fine old house of Benedictine nuns, from the Akers family. She handed it over to a community of Anglican nuns, who had been founded by the late Father Ignatius of Llanthony at Feltham in Middlesex, and whom she had long known intimately.

“About the same time she actually founded, in our Abbey at Maredsous, a Mass to be said daily for the conversion of England. It was laid down as a condition that when the petition was granted, the Mass should still be said daily in thanksgiving. She gave a sum of £2,000 for this foundation.

“The first fruit of this daily Mass was the conversion of the Foundress herself.

“A further result has been the conversion of the nuns to whom she gave Malling Abbey. For this is the same community now established at St. Bride's, Milford Haven, whither they moved from Malling two years ago. They left Malling as the place had become too small for them, but hoped soon to be able to send back a colony of nuns to re-people it. They had no intention of deserting the grand

old Abbey, but there were difficulties about building there, and the house could no longer contain their greatly increased numbers. At present the fate of Malling Abbey is in suspense.

“It was at Malling Abbey, as you doubtless know, that Brother Ælred Carlyle first made his profession as a monk.

“Thus it was that for many years the daily Sacrifice pleaded at Maredsous for these souls, who desired so earnestly to consecrate themselves to God.

“I myself, as an Anglican clergyman, had known the community intimately while they were still settled at Feltham, and I presented them one day with a statue of St. Scholastica, which they still keep in their chapel at St. Bride's. The lamp which hangs beside it was presented by Monsignor R. H. Benson some years later to Malling.

“When I came to St. Bride's this year to prepare the community for their reception into the Catholic Church, I found several of the elder religious who remembered me well, and it was a very happy meeting after more than twenty years.

“ My relations with the Caldey community began much later, and in a rather curious way. In June, 1905, an article appeared in a Catholic weekly paper, giving a very laudatory and rather too gushing account of the Anglican Benedictines then at Painsthorpe in Yorkshire. This provoked controversy, and some violent letters appeared abusing the monks as shams and frauds. I was so much disgusted at the tone of the correspondence, that I wrote to protest, explaining that while of course I could not recognize the monks as real Benedictines, yet I was convinced from all I had heard of them that they were sincere and earnest men, leading a very mortified life according to St. Benedict's Holy Rule, and striving to serve God perfectly according to their lights. I added that my own experience had taught me that souls were never won by abuse, and that the true method to convert them was by showing them sympathy and charity in their difficulties, and trying to understand their position.

“ This letter drew, on July 24, a private communication from Abbot Ælred, in which he said, ‘ I feel that I cannot let this week

pass without writing you a line of grateful thanks for your Christian letter in the paper.'

" 'There is no question,' he went on, 'but that we are all in good faith, and in the present state of the world which is given over to forgetfulness of God and neglect of holy things, it is a grievous pity that we, who at least possess in common the love of our dear Lord, should make it possible for those who do not know Him to throw the old gibe at us, "See how these Christians love one another."' "

"This letter naturally led to others, and established friendly relations, which were cemented some years later by the charity shown by the monks to a consumptive boy who had left their community to become a Catholic, and whom they took back when he was friendless, and stricken with the fatal disease, and nursed most lovingly until his death. This was in 1911. The poor boy lived a year, and died praying with his last breath for the conversion of his benefactors. In a paper which he left behind him, he expressed in the most emphatic terms his joy at dying in the holy Faith of the one true Church of Jesus Christ, and his most earnest

“ My relations with the Caldey community began much later, and in a rather curious way. In June, 1905, an article appeared in a Catholic weekly paper, giving a very laudatory and rather too gushing account of the Anglican Benedictines then at Painsthorpe in Yorkshire. This provoked controversy, and some violent letters appeared abusing the monks as shams and frauds. I was so much disgusted at the tone of the correspondence, that I wrote to protest, explaining that while of course I could not recognize the monks as real Benedictines, yet I was convinced from all I had heard of them that they were sincere and earnest men, leading a very mortified life according to St. Benedict's Holy Rule, and striving to serve God perfectly according to their lights. I added that my own experience had taught me that souls were never won by abuse, and that the true method to convert them was by showing them sympathy and charity in their difficulties, and trying to understand their position.

“ This letter drew, on July 24, a private communication from Abbot Ælred, in which he said, ‘ I feel that I cannot let this week

pass without writing you a line of grateful thanks for your Christian letter in the paper.'

" 'There is no question,' he went on, 'but that we are all in good faith, and in the present state of the world which is given over to forgetfulness of God and neglect of holy things, it is a grievous pity that we, who at least possess in common the love of our dear Lord, should make it possible for those who do not know Him to throw the old gibe at us, "See how these Christians love one another."' "

"This letter naturally led to others, and established friendly relations, which were cemented some years later by the charity shown by the monks to a consumptive boy who had left their community to become a Catholic, and whom they took back when he was friendless, and stricken with the fatal disease, and nursed most lovingly until his death. This was in 1911. The poor boy lived a year, and died praying with his last breath for the conversion of his benefactors. In a paper which he left behind him, he expressed in the most emphatic terms his joy at dying in the holy Faith of the one true Church of Jesus Christ, and his most earnest

prayer that all whom he loved and who had been good to him might find their way into the same sacred fold.

“ Here again Catholic prayers were accomplishing their unseen but mighty work.

“ To these must be added the mighty stream of prayers that went up to God during the Great Novena promoted by the Guild of Ransom in 1911 and 1912. Caldey was among the principal objects of that great outpouring of prayer for England’s conversion.

“ So we need not be surprised to find, that in Lent, 1912, the two communities began most seriously to consider the claims of the Holy See upon their allegiance.

“ They examined the question earnestly, with prayer and much study. The result was disappointing to those of us who knew of this, and who had such high hopes of a speedy answer to our prayers. But we can see now that it was for the best that they decided to wait, for God’s hour had not yet struck. Some of them were then at least intellectually convinced, but by no means all. And if they had moved at that time, the communities

would have been split up, instead of moving almost unanimously as they did a year later.

“What followed then is public knowledge.

“It was on the Feast of St. Peter's Chair, February 22, 1913, that the Abbot wrote to me :

““I have this afternoon wired to you, please start for Caldey as soon as possible, we need your help and advice.

““I am writing on behalf of the great majority of my community, for the nuns of St. Bride's and for myself, to ask you to be good enough to come to Caldey as soon as you can, to give us the benefit of your help and advice with regard to our reception into the Catholic Church. I need not trouble you now with any details. It is sufficient to say that God has clearly shown us His Will, and that we are prepared to submit to the authority of the Holy See completely and unreservedly. You are the first Catholic priest to whom I have written. . . . I have, of course, ceased to minister as an Anglican, and we wait now for your arrival.’

“It was on the Feast of the Martyrdom of SS. Peter and Paul (June 29 last) that the

work begun that day was completed when Bishop Mostyn clothed Brother Ælred Carlyle and his companions in the Benedictine habit, and announced that by virtue of faculties received from the Holy See, Caldey Abbey was now canonically established as a true Benedictine Monastery.

“Some days earlier, on the Feast of St. Barnabas, ‘the Son of Consolation,’ a like touching ceremony had taken place at St. Bride’s Abbey.

“Within these two dates, no less than seventy-four souls belonging to the two places have been received into the Holy Catholic Church.”

So far runs the paper read at Plymouth. It may be desirable to add a few words to complete the story. On the Feast of Pentecost, May 31, 1914, the Superior of Saint Bride’s was admitted to Holy Profession by Bishop Mostyn, and installed the following day as Lady Abbess. On June 14, 1914 (the Sunday within the octave of Corpus Christi), the nuns were all professed by the Bishop; and two days later he solemnly blessed the Lady Abbess. With regard to Caldey, Dom Ælred

Carlyle was professed at Maredsous, on the completion of his year's novitiate there, on the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, June 29, 1914, and ordained priest on the following Sunday, July 5. He returned to England at the beginning of August, and was installed as Abbot on the Feast of Saint Laurence, August 10, 1914, by Bishop Mostyn, who finally gave him, as Abbot, the solemn blessing of the Church on the Feast of Saint Luke, October 18, 1914. This day was the eighth anniversary of the coming to Caldey of the Community in 1906. Surely the prayers of Sister Gertrude Mary have been more than answered, for these souls bound to her by so close a bond.

While thanking God for His great mercies and wonderful graces, let us pray that what she saw in her visions may become a living reality, and that Caldey and Saint Bride's may, indeed, yet prove "homes of Saints, the Paradise of the Holy Trinity upon earth."

DOM BEDE CAMM, O.S.B.

CALDEY,
Feast of Saint Luke, 1914.

AUTHOR'S PROTESTATION

I SUBMIT this work humbly and with my whole heart, to the infallible judgment of the Holy Church and of her august Head. In conformity with the Decrees of Urban VIII., I protest that I attribute nothing save a purely human authority to any report given, or any account published herein ; and also that, if the expression “ Blessed ” or “ Saint ” is applied to persons who are neither canonized nor beatified, it is merely as used in ordinary language, and not as anticipating or forestalling the decisions of the Holy See.

APPROBATIONS

From the Secretary of State to His Holiness.

ROME,

October 5, 1911.

REVEREND MOTHER,

You have asked me to present to the Sovereign Pontiff, in your name and in that of Monsieur l'Abbé Legueu, your Chaplain, the two volumes of "Une Mystique de nos Jours," published by the labours of the latter, with the authorization of Monseigneur, the Bishop of Angers, concerning Sister Gertrude Mary, Religious of your Institute.

The Holy Father bids me thank you for this your homage, which has been most acceptable to him, and he most willingly grants to you, as well as to your good Chaplain, and your whole congregation, the Apostolic Benediction.

With my own thanks for the two volumes

which you have presented to myself, I beg you to accept, Reverend Mother, the expression of my devotion in our Lord.

R. CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL.

BISHOP'S PALACE, ANGERS,
June 5, 1911.

MY DEAR CHAPLAIN,

I learn with keen pleasure that the first edition of your book, "*Une Mystique de nos Jours*," has run out, and that there are already numerous demands for a second, which will doubtless be followed by more.

This work may be said to have spread itself, not only over all the countries of Europe, but even in other parts of the world. Is not such a rapid and universal diffusion another marvellous grace added by our Lord to those with which He favoured Sister Gertrude Mary? There can be no doubt that God means hereby to oppose the pride of human science, by the mystery of His supernatural action in a perfectly simple and frank soul; and also to produce in many other souls fruits of edification and salvation.

The most precious testimonies come to

you from all parts, and from persons much to be commended for their science and for their virtue.

How I bless the Lord for having willed so to distinguish our dear Community of Saint Charles, and, by means of one of its humblest daughters, to multiply His blessings even unto the ends of the world !

Accept, my dear Chaplain, the assurance of my affectionate devotion.

✠ JOSEPH,
Bishop of Angers.

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, AVIGNON,
October 28, 1910.

“There are in this book words which are veritable pearls, and which have an exquisite charm of frank piety and ardent charity. . . . As a whole, the book reveals to us a beautiful soul, closely united to God and possessed with the love of the Cross ; and it may do great good to those contemplative souls who are athirst for sacrifice and for Divine love.”

✠ M. A.,
Archbishop of Avignon.

“The Sacred Heart has willed that this book should be written ; and will bless it. . . . This little soul, so well beloved of Jesus, fascinates other souls. . . . She is worthy to rank beside little Teresa of Lisieux, and other flowers which our Lord has made to blossom in these days. I am convinced that we are face to face with an extraordinarily privileged soul.”

J. B. LEMIUS,

Former Superior of Montmartre.

“I rejoice that the good God has given such a beautiful soul to your Community, and I congratulate your Chaplain upon having directed her, and obliged her to write down all the favours granted to her. I do not think I am mistaken in saying that the book will do great good ; there is about it a perfume of piety which is rarely found even in the lives of the Saints. This is doubtless due to the fact that the person herself lays bare her own life, and expresses her own feelings.”

An eloquent and zealous Missionary.

“What an angelic face she has ! What a blessing she must have been to all who knew

her! And what an honour for your Community, Reverend Mother, to be able to present such souls to the world and to God. You may count upon me to make her known here, and to increase the good which this life, full only of the greatest purity and the love of God, is destined to do to all who study it."

G. HUMEAU,

*Director of the School of Saint Stanislas,
Poitiers.*

"The Holy Spirit breathes where He wills, and during a lesson in needlework He is able to manifest the depths of the Divine Essence. . . . The dispositions of this artless soul, of this 'little daughter of God,' are admirable. They put our coldness and cowardice to confusion."

AUGUSTE POULAIN,

*Author of "The Graces of Interior
Prayer."*

"I congratulate you upon your magnificent work. Your little Sister is most endearing; it is souls like hers which will save France in spite of herself."

CANON JOUIN,

Curé of Saint Augustin, Paris.

“I know nothing so beautiful as the true, simple, and conscious expression of the marvels of reciprocal love between our Lord and the soul. This is what one *truly* finds in your book. Although one may have read works of the same sort, there are in this one charming characteristics not found elsewhere.”

A Jesuit Father.

“A work destined to prepossess public opinion, and to edify souls very greatly.”

ABBÉ DELPIERRE,

*Director of the “Semaine Religieuse”
of Arras.*

“In the very first pages of this delightful autobiography of Sister Gertrude Mary one feels reassured, and one reads with confidence and piety these words, which flow from her supernatural life—words of the highest mystical quality, which the holy religious wrote down under obedience, and in all simplicity. The dawn of our twentieth century has not been lacking in contemplative souls, privileged by the Divine Heart.”

*Bulletin of the Benedictine Works
and Missions.*

“ I congratulate you, Reverend Superioress, upon the signal honour which God has done you and all the Community of Saint Charles, in sending you this dear angelic soul, who will soon be, I hope, one of the purest glories of the Church of France. It is now your part to spread abroad the perfume of this new ‘little flower,’ which Jesus has caused to blossom, and has gathered to Himself—a flower ‘of our own days.’ ”

T. N. TAYLOR,
Saint Peter's College, Glasgow.

J. M. J.

ROME,
December 29, 1910.

MY DEAR REVEREND MOTHER,

After reading the beautiful book you have been good enough to present to me, “ *Une Mystique de nos Jours*,” I feel the need of warmly congratulating you, and of thanking you for a publication which has procured for me such interior joy, and which is destined to exercise, especially in Communities, a strengthening and fruitful apostleship.

To the ecclesiastical authority alone it belongs to judge, *once and for all*, of these

writings ; and of course my personal appreciation must always remain subordinate to that of the Hierarchy ; equally, of course, as your Chaplain remarks, all the details cannot be vouched for. But with these reservations, I hasten to tell you that I find in these communications a harmonious whole of indications and proofs, which appear to me to bear the seal of truth.

This unfailing humility which only asks to remain hidden ; this mistrust of self, which always fears illusion, and has constant recourse to a Director ; these ardent aspirations towards the supernatural ; this need of making reparation ; this intense desire for the life of union ; this continuous intimacy with our Lord and the Blessed Virgin ; the one and only end arrived at—the Kingdom of God ; and finally the blossoming of every virtue. Here, indeed, are unmistakable signs of the Divine action in this soul.

I hope for a wide diffusion of a book which exhales such a perfume of grace.

At a time when the supernatural is denied with so much obstinacy, how comforting it is to see it affirmed ! and to lay hold of it, so to

speaking, in a mystic so truly belonging to our own days.

Religious Communities, so violently persecuted, will take fresh courage in thinking that our Lord is always with His true spouses. Generous souls will say, with Sister Gertrude Mary: "It is not my ideal to die at the hour when the spouses of Jesus Christ are summoned to Golgotha. . . . No; I wish to go there with Jesus, to suffer with Him and for Him."

Persons living in the world may also find profit from this book. This practical proof of the supernatural is well calculated to strengthen their faith, and rekindle their piety.

It is especially consoling for your congregation to hope that our Lord, after having made to it the double gift of Sister Saint Martinian and Sister Gertrude Mary, is reserving still more precious favours for the future.

F. ÉDOUARD HUGON,
*Of the Friars Preachers,
Professor of Dogma at the Collegia
Angelica in Rome.*

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
EDITOR'S PREFACE - - -	v
AUTHOR'S PROTESTATION - - -	xxiii
APPROBATIONS - - -	xxiv
INTRODUCTION - - -	xxxv
AUTHOR'S NOTE - - -	xlvii
 I. VOCATION - - -	 1
II. THE NOVITIATE - - -	12
III. SACRED PLEDGES - - -	16
IV. IMMOLATION - - -	21
V. PURGATORY - - -	34
VI. THE SAINTS - - -	46
VII. THE ANGELS - - -	53
VIII. THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN - - -	65
IX. WITH THE CHILD JESUS - - -	78
X. WITH THE SACRED HEART - - -	86
XI. AT THE SACRED TRIBUNAL - - -	99
XII. AT HOLY MASS - - -	107
XIII. HOLY COMMUNION - - -	112
XIV. VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT - - -	121
XV. UNION WITH JESUS IN EVERY ACTION OF THE DAY - - -	 124
XVI. THE MOST HOLY TRINITY - - -	127
XVII. THE FATHER - - -	144
XVIII. THE ALLIANCE WITH THE WORD - - -	149
XIX. THE ALLIANCE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT - - -	163
XX. THE DIVINE BEAUTY - - -	174

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
SISTER GERTRUDE MARY ON THE DAY AFTER HER CLOTHING - - - - <i>frontispiece</i>	
THE HOUSE IN WHICH SISTER GERTRUDE MARY WAS BORN - - - - -	1
MOTHER HOUSE OF THE COMMUNITY OF ST. CHARLES, ANGERS - - - - -	10
NOVITIATE OF THE COMMUNITY OF ST. CHARLES -	12
CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES -	70
CHAPEL OF THE MOTHER HOUSE - -	156

INTRODUCTION

“LES TENDRESSES DIVINES” (DIVINE FAVOURS)

No title could better suit the little book which I have the honour and joy of presenting to you. It is, indeed, all perfumed with the favours of God for a soul who was singularly privileged ; and full also of the outpourings of her gratitude and love to God.

Favours received with the most profound humility ; love increased and proved by sacrifice ; purity cultivated with extreme care in order to be less unworthy of the Divine Spouse—all these sweet, supernatural flowers, transplanted from Heaven to earth, bloom in a human heart at the breath of the “ Well-Beloved.”

Like all the great mystics, Sister Gertrude Mary sings the Canticle of the Eternal Love. She repeats, with Saint Gregory : “ God thirsts

for the thirst of man" ("Deus sitit sitiri"). And with her sister, Blessed Margaret Mary:

"Je possède en tout temps et je porte en tout lieu
Et le Dieu de mon cœur et le Cœur de mon Dieu."

Showing us the Heart of Jesus, she complains gently that we do not know well enough, nor preach as we should, His incomprehensible Love. She desires to give this Love to all souls.

Sister Gertrude Mary is a flower of our own Anjou—a flower with no brilliancy in the eyes of the world. Her simple, uniform life—I mean her exterior life—may be summed up in a few words: Born at Lion d'Angers of a very poor family, Anne Marie Bernier was baptized on October 28, 1870. On June 12, 1881, she made her First Communion. As a little working dressmaker, she felt herself called to the religious life. She entered the Community of Saint Charles; and on November 4, 1887, she received the name of Gertrude Mary. On June 21 of the following year she took the holy habit. As she had obtained her elementary certificate, she was

put in charge successively of the following classes: (1) Of a second class in the Free School of Saint Joseph at Angers; (2) during some months, in 1892, of a first class at the Daughter House of Les Rosiers; (3) then, of the first free class in the Daughter House of Saint Laud at Angers, in the Rue Kellermann. But, on account of the bad state of her health, in 1894, she was almost entirely freed from teaching and given the charge of the children's manual work. Driven out from Saint Laud with the other religious on July 3, 1903, she returned to Saint Charles. On September 4, 1903, she was placed in the Workroom, Rue Pocquet de Livonnière, to take charge of the children's work. Illness brought her back to the Mother House on May 22, 1905, where she died on May 24, 1908.

As to her true life—the interior life—how can it be sketched? I shall not attempt to do so. I prefer to refer you to the pages in which she has described it,* and which she

* "*Une Mystique de nos Jours*," published 1, Rue de la Meignanne, Angers, in one volume (in 8vo.) of 700 pages, containing the greater part of her writings.

for the thirst of man" ("Deus sitit sitiri"). And with her sister, Blessed Margaret Mary:

"Je possède en tout temps et je porte en tout lieu
Et le Dieu de mon cœur et le Cœur de mon Dieu."

Showing us the Heart of Jesus, she complains gently that we do not know well enough, nor preach as we should, His incomprehensible Love. She desires to give this Love to all souls.

Sister Gertrude Mary is a flower of our own Anjou—a flower with no brilliancy in the eyes of the world. Her simple, uniform life—I mean her exterior life—may be summed up in a few words: Born at Lion d'Angers of a very poor family, Anne Marie Bernier was baptized on October 28, 1870. On June 12, 1881, she made her First Communion. As a little working dressmaker, she felt herself called to the religious life. She entered the Community of Saint Charles; and on November 4, 1887, she received the name of Gertrude Mary. On June 21 of the following year she took the holy habit. As she had obtained her elementary certificate, she was

put in charge successively of the following classes: (1) Of a second class in the Free School of Saint Joseph at Angers; (2) during some months, in 1892, of a first class at the Daughter House of Les Rosiers; (3) then, of the first free class in the Daughter House of Saint Laud at Angers, in the Rue Kellermann. But, on account of the bad state of her health, in 1894, she was almost entirely freed from teaching and given the charge of the children's manual work. Driven out from Saint Laud with the other religious on July 3, 1903, she returned to Saint Charles. On September 4, 1903, she was placed in the Workroom, Rue Pocquet de Livonnière, to take charge of the children's work. Illness brought her back to the Mother House on May 22, 1905, where she died on May 24, 1908.

As to her true life—the interior life—how can it be sketched? I shall not attempt to do so. I prefer to refer you to the pages in which she has described it,* and which she

* “*Une Mystique de nos Jours*,” published 1, Rue de la Meignanne, Angers, in one volume (in 8vo.) of 700 pages, containing the greater part of her writings.

wrote, she says, at the express command of God. Pages worthy of admiration, which must be read as they were written, in simplicity and sincerity of heart. There we find unspeakable communications and outpourings of Jesus Christ ; communications impregnated with the most touching familiarity with the soul chosen by Him. For during twenty-five years, from the day of her First Communion, and from the hour when seated on the rustic bench of her home garden, she was inundated with interior joys, until November 4, 1907, when, by her alliance with the Holy Spirit, she attained the summit, as it were, of her spiritual life ; and, again, on till the time of her death ; all this time, as a child, a young girl, a religious, she had, like Saint Teresa and other chosen souls, “ the experimental perception of God.” We can see, too, in these same pages, and with much edification to ourselves, the continual ascent of this soul in all virtue, which ascent is the best proof of supernatural favours ; her progress in humility, in sweetness ; and how, overflowing with love, she offers herself to Jesus to be “ His victim.” She cries out, on May 28, 1905 : “ Love has chosen me ; Love

has called me; I give myself in love to Love!"

If you have not time to read the larger work, take, dear reader, this little one, which I here offer you—a delightful bouquet, more agreeable than those of the "flower-girl Glycera," whose talent Saint Francis of Sales praises with so much charm in his "Introduction to the Devout Life," made for you by the director to whom God Himself confided the soul of Gertrude Mary.

As I have read both the smaller and the larger volume, I would only suggest to you a few personal reflections, which, if my presumption is not too great, may serve as a guiding thread in your reading. It may be said, "Sister Gertrude Mary is a mystic"; and some may smile at the words. Why? Certainly, she was constantly in union with God. Would that we might all be united with Him like her! But notice, all you who smile at a word you do not understand, that the devotion of Sister Gertrude Mary is always, and in all things, *practical*. From every supernatural light which she receives, or claims to receive; from every favour that she enjoys, however

extraordinary it may be, she at once draws some conclusion for the amendment or perfecting of her life. The higher she is raised by God, the deeper refuge she takes in humility; the more she seeks for suffering, and devotes herself to others, the more patient and sweet she is to all around her, the more the "servant of all." Here is a very reassuring fact. Then, she is very far from being an egoist. You will notice that poets and learned men, in their "tower of ivory" where they work, are always in fear of their inventions being stolen from them; they guard them, and keep them for themselves, with most jealous efforts. Sister Gertrude Mary, on the contrary, never wishes to remain alone in the enjoyment of the heavenly gifts. God overwhelms her with them, and she asks Him, with touching and confident simplicity, "Hast Thou nothing for others?" And she names her companions, her relations, her director, and many more. She was truly "a smile of God" in the world.

Her zeal, like her prayer, is *Catholic*. You must understand the word in its fullest acceptation. Her heart is the heart of an

apostle ; opened by God, it became as great as the whole world ; I had almost said as great as the Heaven to which she was so often transported. This religious seeks to promote God's interests everywhere. Her thought embraces the whole Church—Triumphant, Suffering, Militant. She desires to spread the truth abroad in every place, to convert all sinners. She cries, in a transport worthy of admiration : “ I wish to be the true daughter of the Church.” This was the cry of another good Frenchwoman, her elder sister, Blessed Joan of Arc, who also was visited daily by the Angels and the Saints of Heaven. And, what affected me more deeply than anything else, she prays and suffers more especially for priests. Is not this the most fruitful kind of charity, since they bear so great a weight on their shoulders ? You will doubtless be astonished, as you turn these pages, at the prodigality of God towards His humble servant. You must know that she was more startled than anyone else by them ; but she knew the reason.

“ God compensates Himself by the love of certain souls for the insensate hatred of others.

He says : ‘The more fiercely persecution shall rage, the nearer I shall approach to My faithful friends, the more I shall ask of them to suffer with Me and for Me.’ ”

The poor child who used to go to the distribution of bread in the parish where she was born received also, most abundantly, the gifts of God. The more men try to drive Jesus out of souls, the more He desires to give Himself in revenge, to faithful generous hearts. Look around you and take heart. He is calling all Christians, above all, little children, by His Vicar, Pius X., to the Holy Table where He becomes their Food, and they come to Him. Is not this the dawn of His triumph ? Like Sister Mary of the Divine Heart,* Sister Gertrude Mary predicted the Reign of the Heart of Jesus. When will it come ? Let us, with her, work, pray, love, and suffer for this end.

Perhaps you will count up the Divine words which she heard, or believed she heard, and you will be astonished ; finding them considerably more numerous than in many lives

* See the beautiful book of Abbé L. Chasle, “Sister Mary of the Divine Heart.” London.

of the Saints. This is true ; what must we conclude from it ? Study the latter, examine them, and compare them with her life. These Divine words are in every case incomparably more beautiful than those, however surprising they may be, of the religious herself. Does not this fact alone suffice to prove their heavenly origin ? They are, for the humble and docile soul, both light and nourishment. Perhaps you will still say to me : “ How could such treasures have remained hidden for so long ? ” Because, after the example of those great souls whom God marks with His Divine seal, Gertrude Mary kept “ the secret of the King,” and only revealed it when ordered to do so from on high, and, with an increasing repugnance, to her director alone. Because, more particularly, she united in one, with a facility which made her able to escape all indiscreet glances, the two lives of Mary and Martha. This contemplative religious, in actual converse with God, gave herself up, under holy obedience, to all those exterior works which her health allowed her to accomplish : the instruction of children, manual labour, visits to the parlour, care of the sick.

Thus, during thirty years, this soul who was, or who believed herself to be, favoured with extraordinary supernatural gifts, kept her secret safe.

Nothing of it transpired, except the radiance of God, shining forth in a life of perfection.

I tell you, that, looked at from a purely human point of view, this silence of a woman (and I should say the same of a man), is a miracle.

And I would add in conclusion—for it would not be fitting to attach a lengthy preface to so short a book—that I find another marvel in the language of Gertrude Mary. It is stated that certain seers, men and women, always bore in their eyes and on their faces the reflection of the God Whom they contemplated. The eyes of Sister Gertrude Mary had, it appears, a strange depth and sweetness. I never saw them; but it is very certain that this humble “little daughter of the good God,” who had just managed to obtain her teacher’s certificate and was very poorly read, has in her writings something of the unction and splendour of the Divine Word. She has some magnificent expressions. Speaking of a

meditation, she says: "I immediately entered into God." On her bed of agony, coughing incessantly, she murmurs this word of love: "Every fit of coughing is a cry to Heaven." Read over and over again the last chapter of this present volume, "The Divine Beauty." It is quite admirable. Compared to that, the most beautiful pages of our contemporary stylists are simply—*literature*.

So, with a growing joy, I repeat these words: "Praise to Jesus, Who has chosen for Himself this gentle lamb from our dear country, and from one of our most beloved religious families."

And I hail in advance the blessed day when the Pope, the infallible Doctor of the Church, will place Gertrude Mary on our altars.

ALEXIS CROSNIER, PRIEST,
*Professor to the Catholic Faculties
of the West, Director of Free
Education of Youth in the Diocese
of Angers.*

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THIS book is a short extract from the autobiography of Sister Gertrude Mary, and gives certain chosen pages from it. It is addressed to those persons whom the price or length of the original work would dismay. It will be known, we hope, among those lowly and humble souls whom Sister Gertrude Mary so much loved, and of whom she was one.

Here, once again, I shall leave the religious to speak for herself. What could replace, or be equal to, the limpid clearness, the charming ingenuity, the distinguished simplicity of her language? To correct it would not make the book more perfect; to add to it would be to take off the bloom.

The real author of the book wrote her spiritual report for the director who asked her to do so.

STANISLAS LEGUEU,

Chaplain to the Community.



HOUSE IN WHICH ANNE BERNIER (SR. GERTRUDE MARY) WAS BORN.
The cross shows the room in which she was born.



HOUSE IN WHICH SHE LIVED FOR ABOUT TWELVE YEARS.

SISTER GERTRUDE MARY

CHAPTER I

VOCATION

OUR Lord takes delight in lowly souls.

My life as a child, as a young girl, as a religious, has been very sweet.

In the world, my Confessor and the religious whom I knew used to say I was the spoilt child of God ; at Saint Charles', our Mothers have often told me the same thing.

I will not speak of my infancy ; I have no clear remembrance of it. My good Angel alone enjoyed the Divine ray which was already illuminating my soul (of this I am convinced).

When I began to go to school—that is to say, at about eight years old—my soul opened to grace, as a flower does to the spring. At

the same time I felt a great attraction to prayer and to Divine things. I loved to study my catechism, and felt a great joy when I heard God spoken of. This was not an ordinary joy; I already felt myself the tenderly loved child of the good Father.

Soon I heard the Divine call. At nine years old my choice was made. During this year, preparatory to my First Communion, oh, how much I felt God loved me! and I often heard Him speak to my heart. Already Jesus hungered for me, and I for Him. After having ardently desired this great day, it came at last, preceded by a retreat, during which my soul was inundated with graces and consolations. I was at the very gate of Paradise, and on the day of my First Communion I entered in. I belonged altogether to Jesus, and Jesus to me; there was not a cloud in my soul. I think I felt the joy of the blessed in Heaven. All the treasures contained in the Heart of Jesus He gave to me that day without measure.

My class-mistresses embraced me several times, and said: "You are extremely happy, are you not?" I contented myself with

simply replying with a smile: "Oh yes!" I was not going to divulge the secrets of the King. My mistresses had chosen me to read the Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin. Jesus intended to show me by this that He wished me to belong to Him, and to live for Him. He willed that His Divine Mother should present me to Him on this great day.

My attraction to the religious life grew as I grew, and the love of Jesus showed itself more and more. He was more to me than a friend or a brother—He was a Father.* If I had any desire, I used to express it to Him, and He at once granted it. If I had any trouble, I confided it to Him, and He at once consoled me. If I had any annoyances, any difficulties, I at once submitted them to Him, and they immediately disappeared. If I had anything to say which disquieted me, I would beg Him to say it for me, and He always granted what I asked. And so it was all through my life, as a child and a young girl.

I was very happy. In the morning Jesus used to wake His child; and every day, by

* She had no father living at this time.

five o'clock, or a little later, I was before Him in His Tabernacle paying Him my homage. We talked to each other. My soul was thus fortified by prayer, and by Mass, and Holy Communion. (I began by three Communions a week, then four, and then five.) I used to continue my thanksgiving as I went to my day's work, for the mistress (to whom I was apprenticed) and I kept silence all the way. She prayed, I prayed; and thus we walked, one, two, and even three miles. In the evening we made our way back, reciting the Rosary together. Already Jesus wished to accustom His little spouse to prayer—vocal prayer, of course, but more especially mental prayer. And He willed also to accustom her to suffering. When I was about thirteen, I began to suffer from ingrowing nails, and the long walk which I had to take morning and evening, often with very unsuitable shoes, increased the evil. Wounds came on my feet. In the evening I suffered so much that I used to walk barefoot on the pavement to ease the pain, and cool the fever which consumed me. All the same, I was happy, and never thought of pitying myself. When I arrived home after

my day's work, I went to visit Jesus, to speak to Him heart to Heart. One prays so well when all is dark, and Jesus is alone in His dwelling. I would willingly have passed my nights before Him, doubtless telling Him the same thing over and over again ; but how could I help it, since He has the patience to listen, and never grows tired of hearing us tell Him that we love Him, and wish to be His alone for ever ? . . .

In the morning He had fed me with Himself in Holy Communion. All the day He had taken care of me, had talked to me interiorly, and had given me other food in spiritual reading—for every day we used to read during our midday recreation ; I had so much need to go and thank our dear Lord. I had also an immense desire to speak to Him of my vocation. I used to pray Him to call me to Himself soon. All the houses in which we went to work were on the road leading to Segré. My heart swelled every morning when we took this direction, leading away from Angers ; and all along the road I would say : “ Lord, this is not the way to Saint Charles’.” Jesus must have smiled, but I had such a great

desire to give myself to Him, to live in His House, and in intimacy with Him, that I prayed Him with all the strength I could to hear me. If only my prayers were all as fervent as that one, I should obtain far more for the souls of others and for myself.

My health would have suffered had I remained longer in the world. At any price I must possess Jesus alone.

How I held the world in horror! I felt I was made for God, and should find rest nowhere but in Him. And to make Jesus more promptly realize my desire, I treated Him as a little child treats her mother until she obtains what she wants—I *tormented* Jesus. How weary He must have grown of hearing me! But was it not He Himself who was inspiring this ardent desire of giving myself to Him, wholly and without reserve? Did He not really wish that I should importune Him in this way? I did not know how to make my prayer properly (I do not know much better even now), but I just told Him everything—my joys, my troubles, my little cares, my anxieties, my desires. What happy moments I passed near His Tabernacle! (I used to

dream of nothing else.) On my knees, with my head hidden in my hands, what sighs I sent up towards our Lord ; and Jesus always answered me—He talked to me, instructed me, inspired me with distaste for the vanities of the world. He showed me the beauty of virtue. He revealed to me the greatness of His love. He was always strengthening my soul, and turning and exciting my will to what was good.

I recall with happiness these visits during the week, and with perhaps greater joy those of Sunday evening, after Vespers — more prolonged, more pious, more fervent. Jesus awaited me, and I felt and heard Him call me to Him.

After a visit to the cemetery with my mother, I would run quickly to church . . . and then I believed myself in Heaven. To know what these Divine consolations, these ineffable joys, are like, one must have tasted them. But to render a true account of them I should have to have written down after each visit to the Blessed Sacrament, after each Communion, all the feelings, the affections, the transports, the different emotions which the

Divine Master aroused in my soul. I hope that my good Angel has thanked our Lord for them all.

One day after Communion, my soul overflowing more than usual with joy and cheerfulness, I allowed my happiness to be seen. Not being able to conceal my joy, it doubtless shone in my face, since a secular who saw it asked me what had happened that morning, what had passed in me after Holy Communion, what was the cause of so great a joy. Then she added, smiling: "Perhaps you saw God." This had happened several times, and I had experienced it that day; but this was the only time anyone ever spoke to me of it, and for this I was very thankful. I think my mistress, who was a good angel to me, was not pleased at the indiscreet question, and that she begged the person never to repeat it.

Jesus used not only to speak to me in Holy Communion, in visits to the Blessed Sacrament, during my walks, and all through the time of my work (which was always sanctified by invocations made aloud and frequently renewed), He even then spoke by night also. (My mother had always advised us to pray till

sleep came.) I say "even then," because, later on, the night became a very favourable time for communing with God.

One evening He spoke earlier than usual, since I was not in bed. I had retired by myself into our little garden. There, seated on a bench, formed of a plank supported upon two stones, I was devoutly reciting my Rosary, when I was favoured with supernatural recollection in a great degree, and my soul was meanwhile flooded with interior joy. (This must have been shortly before I entered the Community of Saint Charles.) Before my prayer I had felt that Jesus had some particular favour ready for me, and that He was awaiting me in this place—that I was being immediately prepared for an abundant outpouring of heavenly blessings.

(When I returned to Lion d'Angers, nearly three years ago, I saw once more, with happiness and gratitude, this place, which has always been dear to me. I remained for some time seated on that same bench, giving thanks to God for this great favour, and praising Him for all His gifts to me, which have been incomparably greater, sweeter, and more intimate

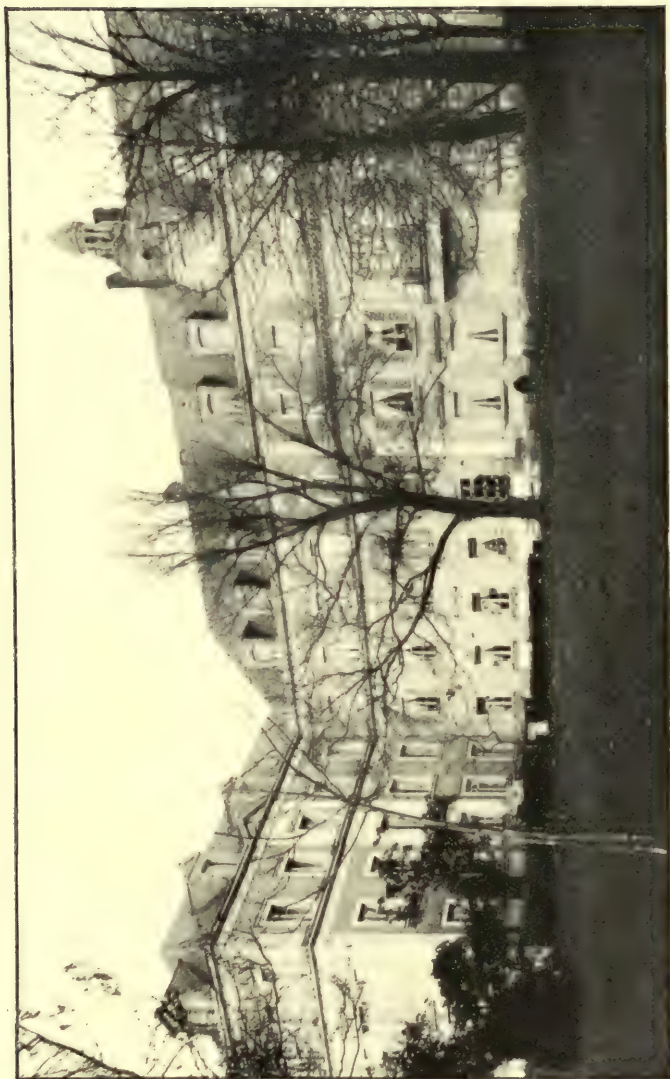
since I was consecrated to Him by the vows of religion.)

Although I was so tenderly loved by God, so spoilt by Jesus and Mary, there was something lacking to my happiness--this was the religious life. The air which I was breathing did not sufficiently nourish my soul; I needed a purer atmosphere—one altogether supernatural and Divine.

I did not dare to speak of my desire to Sister Mary Matilda.* I was perpetually saying to Jesus: "I pray Thee, tell her Thyself." He heard me, and I had nothing to do but to respond and say, "Yes." There was a little conflict as to the choice of a community. When quite young I had thought of Saint Charles'. My dominant attraction was certainly there; and yet my devotion to the Sacred Heart inclined me towards the Visitation. Yet another difficulty presented itself, but was of short duration. My choice fixed itself definitely upon Saint Charles', and never since then has the smallest cloud or the least temptation come to trouble my happiness.

Accustomed to the sweetnesss and tender-

* Superior of the House at Lion d'Angers.



MOTHER HOUSE OF THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT CHARLES, ANGERS.

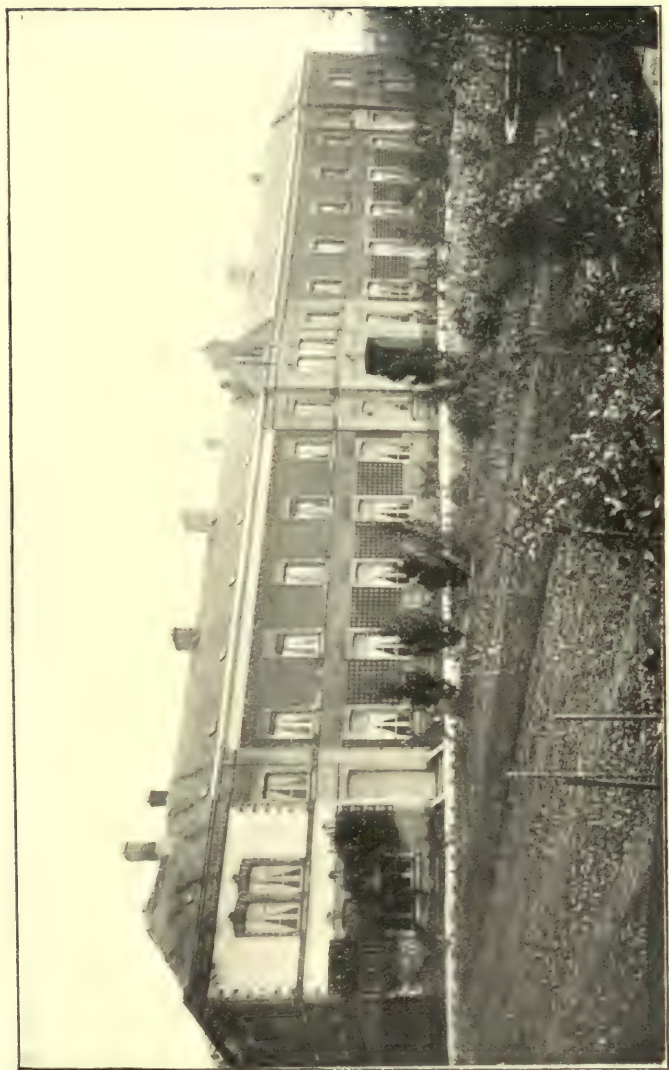
nesses of the Divine Master, I had a heart full of a sensible affection for Jesus and for my own people. I did not know how to leave my mother's side ; and when I was obliged to sleep a night away from home, I could not resign myself to this absence—my heart used to suffer. How could I bring myself to leave my family for ever ? That was the great sacrifice. I knew how much I should grieve my poor mother, and that I could have been a great consolation to her. My heart often bled, and yet, nevertheless, I greatly desired to give myself wholly to God. Jesus gave me the courage to make the sacrifice ; and the thought of my family has never preoccupied me beyond due measure. It has never been the occasion of temptation to me. I have suffered with my own people, who have had much to suffer. I have wept with them ; but my heart, although crushed, has always attached itself more closely to Jesus. This gives me yet another motive for gratitude to my Divine Master, Who had pity on the weakness of His child, and Who, in His infinite Goodness, willed to spare her the griefs and temptations which she would not have had the courage to bear.

CHAPTER II

THE NOVITIATE

IF, while in the world, I had been the object of the special care of Providence ; if God had always shown me so much tenderness, could He—I will not say abandon me—but be less prodigal of His loving attentions when I was in religion ? No, it could not be ; God does not treat His children like that. “ The Lord hath taken me by the hand, and hath led me according to His Will.” Transplanted into His chosen garden, the religious life, my soul has been wonderfully cultivated by the Divine Master Himself.

I entered the novitiate on February 24, 1887, and from that day onwards, until October, 1894, I was, without any notable interruption, overwhelmed with visible graces, with ineffable sweetnesses, with abundant consolations. My soul enjoyed a profound peace. I never knew



NOVITIATE OF THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT CHARLES.

the faintest cloud, the least disquietude of conscience, the smallest fear of God or of His judgments. I loved God, and I felt myself loved by Him with an overflowing love. He always seemed pleased with the small amount of good which I did. I was naturally inclined to good and to virtue. I could apply the verse just quoted to this period of my life ; for it appeared as if God had forbidden Satan to approach me. I found everything always right. Everyone was too good to me, and did far too much for me. I felt that all my Sisters were better than I was. In a word, I saw only the bright side of everything. I was extremely happy ; temptation never assailed me as it does now. I had only to praise God for the happy dispositions which He had placed in my soul, but which I have never known how to develop, or even to keep safe. . . . I applied myself to do everything well, having but one desire—to live a very hidden, a very unknown life, and to become a holy religious. That was always my ambition. I found all this quite ordinary and natural ; and I did not concern myself in the least about other things. I enjoyed profound peace. I did not know what it was to

have a "scruple of conscience," for there was nothing which disquieted me. There was in my soul, as it were, an irresistible current drawing me towards goodness. God was always with me, and I was conscious of Him even in the midst of my exterior occupations, enjoying His Presence in a sensible manner. Living thus in His Presence, I used to hear Him speak to me, and ask of me little acts of virtue. I came to be able to make forty or fifty in the day. At that time I kept count and wrote them down ; but I have long since ceased to do this. I left off when the state of union had become almost continual.

It is not enough to say my soul was filled with peace ; it was also full of supernatural joy—joy in the midst of the difficulties I encountered ; joy in the physical suffering which has been my lot for a long time ; joy in the trials which I experienced. Peace and joy always—in Jesus, with Jesus, and through Jesus. When the soul feels herself thus loved by God, she feels she must also bear witness to her own love for Him, and then she begs from Jesus the means of proving it. The little sufferings of every day do not suffice her heart ;

she needs more painful trials—she must share His Passion.

Divine love, as it grew in my soul during my novitiate, developed at the same time the love of sacrifice and zeal for the salvation of souls. The nearer the moment came for me to leave the novitiate, the greater became the desire of my soul. I had sometimes revealed it to my companions at recreation. This was to go into Charente; and my motive (which I kept hidden) was that I should find in that un-Christian part of France more sacrifices than in our own Anjou. One of our Sisters told our Mother of this, and I believed I was going to have my wish. I was overjoyed. I hoped to start for this far-off district. I should be, as I had desired, completely unknown; and I should suffer—such was my dream. But the good God did not so will for me. I made a very great sacrifice when I was sent to Saint Joseph's, but many times since then I have thanked God for that grace.

CHAPTER III

SACRED PLEDGES *

“ALL for Jesus, the Life and the Joy of my soul!”

How God must love me to pursue me always as He does! This morning, immediately after Holy Communion, Jesus showed Himself to me, and asked, “Do you will for yourself that which I will for you?” In spite of my fear (for I know what are the gifts Jesus offers to His friends), I replied: “If Thou wilt promise me Thy Love, O Jesus, I accept all that Thy Heart has prepared for me.”

“Then I can write?” asked Jesus.

“Yes, my Jesus, write.”

* Sister Gertrude Mary has not given us the secret of the joys of her clothing and profession; but she has described the contract made between Jesus and herself. This contract, which was the perfecting of the first union, was nevertheless only a first token of the union of the future.

Then, opening His Heart, He wrote on the first page of that Sacred Book: "My spouse pledges herself to live in mortification, in suffering, in humiliation, in poverty, in contempt, and in total abandonment."

On the second page the Divine Master wrote: "In return I pledge Myself to uphold My spouse by My Grace, which shall be always powerful, though not always sensibly felt, and to give her My Love."

After this Jesus made me kiss the Cross of wood which He held in His Hands. The Divine contract is signed. But I told Jesus that, as I belonged no longer to myself, the agreement would have only the value and the duration which you gave to it, my Father; would only be a true contract in so far as you approved it; and that it would last only for the time marked out by you. Shall I keep faithful to this engagement? That is the question I ask myself. I fear my weakness, but I have great confidence in the goodness and power of my Jesus.

Every morning Jesus will open His Heart that I may read our engagements; and every evening the Divine Book will open once more,

so that by the light of Jesus I may ascertain what has been my generosity or my cowardice. When I find I have been unfaithful, I will not be discouraged; I will humble myself for having made such promises to Jesus, and for not having had the courage to fulfil them; and then I will set myself once more to the work of my sanctification, counting much on Jesus and not at all on myself.

I am like those flowers which close in the shade. The shade in my case is the Devil; when he approaches, I shut myself up close. What a poor, feeble nature, which, in order not to flag, needs the constant help of a bright sun. "O Divine Sun of Justice, send Thy healthful rays into my poor soul, and never permit her to be closed to holy inspirations, nor to the wise and godly counsels of her director."

Our Lord said once to me after Holy Communion: "Nothing whatever of self should be left in you; everything should be wholly Divine. You must absolutely forget yourself and have one thought only—God and the salvation of souls. Let Me do what I will in you; give Me all that I ask. You should be

like soft wax in My hands. Neither will I have you seek for consolation, nor even desire it ; I will give it to you when I see fit."

After these lessons in death to self-love, given during my thanksgiving, the Divine Master deigned to manifest His Presence in a very sensible manner. He dilated my soul so that He could walk in it with ease ;* and, little as it was, it became quite suddenly very large. I saw it spread out before me as an immense measureless space, where the Lord of Lords was walking. He, the Infinite, seemed to be at His ease in this poor obscure little place, now become rich by the Presence of Infinite Goodness, and rendered glorious by the Presence of the Uncreated Beauty. And the wonder was that my soul seemed to dilate more and more, and I contemplated the Divine Immensity, seemingly in no way constrained in this poor habitation. It appeared to overflow it on all sides. Yes ; He Who has set their limits to the earth and sea enlarges the soul when it so pleases Him ; and does so in an astounding way when He dwells

* See St. Ambrose, 8 in Ps. cxviii. No. 7, Migne, xv. 1296.

in any soul which is specially chosen by Him. I think that, for such a one, He does not set any measure to these Divine overflowings any more than He does to His love.

For some time this grace had often been accorded me, but it had not lasted so long. All through this day I was able to contemplate this wonder in my soul. Astounded and transported with delight at thus finding the Divine Master, in my next visit to the Blessed Sacrament I heard these words: "See how faithful I am to you. And what of your faithfulness to Me?"

Ah! and I? I am always a faithless spouse, an ungrateful child. I could scarcely say my Rosary. These wonderful words kept on coming back to me, and I felt I must meditate upon them. During this same visit I again felt a wish to write these words of our Lord so as to read them when I wished to; but this was the Master's reply: "No; your book is God, and it is always open to you whenever you desire to read in it."

CHAPTER IV

IMMOLATION

PART I.—WHAT SISTER GERTRUDE MARY DESIRED

I BEG you, my Father, to allow me to ask our Lord for suffering. I cannot keep this Divine Saviour waiting any longer. He ceaselessly shows Himself to me, holding in His Left Hand a heavy Cross, and with His Right He beckons me to come near to Him. A little distance separates me from Jesus. I shall overcome it only on that day when I approach the Crucified to relieve Him of His burden. The union of my soul with Him will be consummated by the Cross alone. I know that at this moment I am pleasing to Him, since I am obedient to you; and just as Jesus does not descend upon the altar until the priest has pronounced the words, so He will

not give me the trial until you allow me to ask for it. Obedience costs me much just now, and if my liberty were not chained I should long ago have said to our Lord : " Give me suffering under any form which pleases Thee ; all the crosses Thou shalt choose shall be my choice."

But I belong no longer to myself. I suffer at being unable to take this Cross, which I always see, out of the Hands of Jesus ; nevertheless, I submit . . . if every imaginable trial should be my lot. Still, if I have lively faith and ardent love, shall I not be happy to suffer for my God, happy to be like Him ? Oh, let me say to Him : " Give me this Cross, which I see in Thy Hands, O my Jesus. Thou hast prepared it for me, Thou hast fashioned it from the wood of Thy love. I desire it ; give it to me at once. I do not wish by my cowardice to oblige Thy Heart to give it to some soul less loved, less favoured by Thy gifts. I desire to be able to say to Thee on the day of my death : ' My Jesus, Thou knowest me, for, like Thee, I have carried the Cross.' "

PART II.—JESUS ASKS SOMETHING OF HER

All for Jesus Crucified.

December 31, 1904.—I am terrified this evening. I have just come from the chapel. I would willingly have passed the night there—not that I had received any consolation; I had to treat with Jesus of an important matter. I feel full of fears about it, and almost wish I could convince myself that it was all an illusion.

During my visit our Lord said to me: *
“To you it belongs to make reparation for all the sins committed during the year 1904.” I paid no attention to these first words, believing that they only came from my imagination, and I went on with my prayer. Then our Lord began to speak again. I tried not to listen to this interior voice; but at last I was forced to—our Lord spoke louder. I was, and still am, appalled at hearing such words, and at the idea of fulfilling such a

* “To you.” This expression does not mean that I shall be the only soul to make reparation; but it signifies the greatness of the sufferings I shall have to endure.—

GERTRUDE MARY,

mission. Trembling, I represented my incapacity, and my numberless miseries to the Divine Master. He said to me: "Will you let Me do what I will with you?" I dared not answer. He repeated: "Will you?" Still I kept silence. My terror increased instead of growing less. I went over in my mind these Divine words: "All the sins of 1904"—that year, stained with crimes, and with every sort of abomination. "My God, to whom dost Thou speak?" and He said: "I appoint you My victim of reparation—the victim of My choice."

PART III.—THE FINAL AND COMPLETE OFFERING OF HERSELF

*Feast of the Sacred Heart of Mary,
May 28, 1905.*

"Love has chosen me; Love has called me; I give myself in love to Love."

My God and my all, I have understood Thy mysterious workings in my soul; I have heard Thy loving call; here I am. I offer myself to Thee to be Thy victim in the full acceptance of the word. I give Thee my

heart, my soul, my body, all that I have, that Thou mayest immolate it all according to Thy good pleasure. I offer Thee my life; take it, O my God. Love makes no conditions and no reserves; and I make neither, my most tender Father. I offer Thee myself, and I beseech Thee to accept me, and not to consult either my tastes or my repugnances—only let Thy love content itself, and that is enough for me. I offer myself to Thy justice, Thy sanctity, Thy love.

To Thy justice—that I may repair my own crimes, and those of other poor sinners.

To Thy sanctity—for the sanctification of all consecrated souls, especially priests.

To Thy love—that Thou mayest make of my heart a perpetual holocaust of pure love.

When I consider my weakness, O my God, I am afraid; but when I turn to Thee, O my most sweet and tender Saviour, I feel strengthened, and irresistibly drawn to the most complete immolation of myself.

I mistrust myself, O my God, but I trust in Thee. O my good and tender Mother Mary, have pity on thy child. She is trembling

with fear ; and yet, in spite of her fears, she desires, by her love, to love and glorify her God. Offer me, I pray thee, to the Most Holy, Most Adorable, and Most Blessed Trinity. I would I had the purity of thy heart so that I might be more worthy of the God to Whom I offer myself.

“O Mary, obtain for me the grace every day to lessen the number of my faults ; to attain to the degree of perfection marked out for me by the Most Holy Trinity ; to live by pure love only ; and, lastly, the grace of final perseverance. O Angels and Saints of Heaven, especially you my patron Saints, say to your beloved King : ‘Here is the victim of Thy choice ; she gives herself up for ever to Thy Love.’ ”

My morning greeting shall be : “O Jesus, I desire to give Thee joy. I resolve to accomplish what is best and most perfect.”

“I wish to suffer, O my God, for Thee and for the salvation of souls.”

These are my engagements made, my day prepared beforehand. The need for immolation is making itself felt more keenly in my soul. You said to us once, my Father : “In

order to love, you must suffer." I understand this better than I ever did before, and I believe that a soul loves truly in that measure in which she mortifies and sacrifices herself—in one word, in proportion as she forgets herself for God. It is so with me. If at the end of the day, I wish to know what has been the measure of my love for God, I examine the measure in which I have mortified myself. Fine sentiments, grand words, are worthless, if not accompanied by deeds.

How many times in the day I ask that I may have true love ! I read in your book on the Holy Spirit :* "We are all God's beggars." Yes, we are indeed. I am very poor, poorer than the poorest of the poor, but I say to the Holy Spirit : "Come, Father of the poor, I wish to be like those beggars who are never tired of asking for Thy love ; for I can never have enough."

To-day, a touching comparison came to me interiorly, showing how we should contemplate the perfect Soul of our Lord ; how we should imitate It, and how It will be one day our joy or our desolation. Our Lord said :

* St. Augustine.'

“ You have seen those copy-books which have on every page some model to retrace or phrase to reproduce ?”

“ Yes, Lord.”

“ Well, these copy-books will give you an idea of what I propose for your imitation.”

The history of the sacred Soul of Jesus is written as many times as there are souls on the earth. Each soul writes her own history every day. (I am speaking of souls who are capable of merit ; no child who dies in infancy writes this history.) Opposite to this history of the soul—often, alas ! a deplorable one—there is always the history of the Soul of Jesus, the model which we ought to copy. The soul should do as a child does who is learning to write : she should often look at her Divine Model and try to reproduce it.

At the Day of Judgment the soul herself will read both these histories. Ah ! it will be quickly done. She will see at a glance if she has reproduced the Divine Model given to her, and there will be joy or desolation for her accordingly for all eternity.

That I may love Thee, O my God, in suffer-

ing ! This is, if I may so say, my war-cry, my countersign, the lever which raises my soul in those moments when she feels herself weak, when trial or illness is more acutely felt, or when the burden of life is pressing more heavily.

For some days now, irksomeness, sadness, disgust, dryness—in one word, all sorts of moral suffering—have seized more strongly than usual upon my soul. I continue to do my work, to pray, to suffer, as though I felt nothing, not even speaking to you about it. I say to myself : “ This is how I must love, pray, work, suffer, without savour or consolation. I must continue my road set with thorns, as if it were strewn with roses.”

This morning my sufferings made themselves felt very keenly. My courage seemed to fail, and Jesus, Who is always so good, came to the help of His sheep.

The Divine Master showed me two travellers making their way along the road of their exile—one habitually carrying a burden ; the other carrying it from time to time, when it pleased the chief Traveller and Master to try the strength of His poor and feeble companion.

You have guessed who the two travellers are—Jesus and the soul. After showing them to me, Jesus said: “I often carry the burden unaided, but these last few days I have given it to you.” Jesus always carries it; what should we do without Him? But He does not always let us feel He is carrying it, leaving us sometimes apparently alone, at the mercy of our own weakness.

All this took place at the time of prayer. I regained strength by the holy exercise. Shortly afterwards, during the morning, my sufferings were redoubled; but with their increase a supernatural strength increased also. . . . I felt that it came not from myself, but from God alone. This strength grew in a measure proportioned to the suffering. Yes—suffering, indeed, it is, but also love. In love one finds the courage to suffer and to forget self for the sake of the loved object. And in a burst of love, not enthusiastic or consciously felt, but I think sincere, I cried out: “My God, I will what Thou wilt. . . . I will love Thee, the Great Example of total abandonment. I will love Thee in suffering, in forgetfulness of self and of creatures. My

God, I will love Thee. How can I even think any longer of myself?"

During my visit to the Blessed Sacrament Jesus said to me: "Withdraw yourself from the outer world." This morning, before Mass, He had said: "God alone, God only." In order to find God alone, silence and recollection are necessary, and the need of them makes itself felt in the soul who is seeking the hidden, the jealous God.

We need to say to God that we love Him—even if we do not feel it sensibly.

"Jesus, I love Thee."

And Jesus, smiling, says to me: "And I love you still more."

"Ah, my Jesus, it is true, but I am trying to love Thee more. And I beg of Thee the grace to be able to do so."

To love the loved object does not suffice for the loving soul; she must also make Him loved by others.

During my prayer again our Lord had said to me: "You and I have very serious business to treat of—the salvation and sanctification of souls." Is it not strange that Jesus should use a poor miserable creature like me? Yes—

and No. It *is* strange, because there are so many souls more generous than I am, who would help Him in a far greater measure ; but it is *not* strange, because in me the power of Jesus is shown forth more radiantly. I am poor, miserable, guilty ; but if it pleases Jesus to make use of me for the salvation and sanctification of souls, I am content ; and I will do all that depends on me for that same sanctification.

“Oh, give me souls, my Jesus ! Give me souls, my Mother Mary. Give saints to the Church of Jesus !” *Saints !* That is my dream. I look at Mother Mary ; I contemplate Jesus in the Tabernacle and in my heart ; and I say to them both : “I will not leave you till you have given me some souls.”

I do not know what Jesus meant to announce to me, what sufferings He was preparing me for to-day ; but when I began to say the Rosary, after offering the first decade to the honour of His sacred Agony, I heard Him ask me : “Will you share My Agony ?” “Yes, Lord, I willingly consent, but Thou wilt uphold me, wilt Thou not ? I count upon Thee.”

My Father, how can I help myself ? Per-

haps I make these promises to Jesus too easily, for I am such a coward. But I cannot resist any desire of His. Whatever the sufferings are for which He is preparing me, whatever the agony He is reserving for me, can I not count upon His support? What agony was He speaking of? Does it mean that He is to receive fresh outrages? I know nothing. But if I could only love Him for all those who love Him not! "O Holy Spirit, pour Thy Love into our hearts. O, Mother of fair Love, ask the Holy Spirit to give us pure, disinterested, generous love."

CHAPTER V

PURGATORY

April 14, 1907.—Yesterday, among the intentions you named as being according to our Lord's desire, you mentioned the souls in Purgatory. After supper, at that hour when everything is quiet, I began to pray, feeling the need of remaining quietly in recollection before God. Already the shrouding veil of the supernatural, of the Divine, of the other world, was covering me on every side. I felt I must occupy myself chiefly with the dear souls in Purgatory. At the moment when this need of my soul was making itself most keenly felt, I knew that when I had prayed for those poor suffering souls a good number of them would enter Paradise. When this knowledge came to me, it was given me to see these poor souls lifting suppliant hands towards Heaven. The state in which I saw them is indescribable. The

place appeared to be a very high tower, round in shape, with no opening except at the top. There were, so to speak, two forces acting upon them—one drawing them to Heaven (this, I think, was love), the other keeping them captive in their place of expiation (and this, I think, was the desire of further purification). They could not, would not, unite themselves to the Infinite Purity and Sanctity, while anything remained for them to expiate. The Blessed Virgin was quite near them; and with her the good angels of the souls who were expecting deliverance. They were awaiting the happy moment when they would be allowed to receive and to introduce into Heaven the souls entrusted to their care. I began to say the Rosary, and I said to the Blessed Virgin:

“At each *Ave* I have the intention of offering thee the Blood of thy Divine Son for the deliverance of these dear souls, and when they are in Paradise they must occupy themselves in praying for the souls of poor sinners.” After having prayed a long while, I seemed to see a great number leave the place of expiation.

On the night of Wednesday, April 11, 1907, I saw in a dream one of my pupils, who died some years ago. I had almost forgotten what she was like. In my dream I saw her very distinctly ; her head was covered with a black woollen scarf, with the ends falling in front. She looked at me fixedly with her great black eyes. She had kept that look of sadness which she had when alive.

The impression caused by the sudden apparition of this child was so strong that I awoke at once. I tried to see if she really was near me. I saw nothing with the eyes of the body, but the memory of her remained vividly with me. I began to pray, and as I was to receive Holy Communion the next morning, I asked our Lord then and there to give a thought to this soul, for I believed her to be still in Purgatory. I tried to go to sleep again, but I lay awake a long time, seeing the child before my eyes. Next day I kept silence about my dream, but the remembrance did not leave me. I thought of telling you about it, but I said to myself: "Why should I tell him? It is not necessary ; it was only a dream."

Two days after, at recreation, I spoke of it, without thinking, to my cell-companion. I in no way expected what she said ; and not only so, but I was extremely surprised at her reply. The longer we talked, the greater grew my astonishment, but I tried not to show it. This was our conversation.

I said : “ I have dreamt about one of my pupils, who died some years ago.”

“ Was it that tall dark girl in black who came and stood close to your bed ?”

How astonished I was at hearing this ! How could Sister Saint Marcellinus, who had never seen the child, know that she was tall and dark ? How did she know, too, that she was in black, and had come and stood near me ?

I said : “ Did you see her, then ?” “ Yes,” she answered, “ but not last night ; it was Wednesday night.”

My astonishment went on increasing. I had told her nothing about which night it was. She then added :

“ If you had told me nothing about it, I should never have spoken of it ; I should have been afraid of exciting you. It was not a dream on my part. I was not asleep. I may have been

in what is called ‘the shadow of sleep’; though I am not sure of this. When I saw this tall person come towards you, I leapt up in my bed, then turned to the wall, and tried to go to sleep, that I might hear and see no more. Then I saw her come nearer to your bed, and look fixedly at you.”

As she said this, Sister Saint Marcellinus exactly reproduced the movements of the child in our cell. I did not know what to think, for she told me so correctly what had passed; she drew so clearly the portrait of the child, that I could not help believing that she had really seen her.* Four days have now passed, and Sister Saint Marcellinus said to me to-day: “What I saw grows no less vivid to my sight.”

On Saturday night, I heard quite near my bed a slight noise, as if someone had upset a small table.

The next day, Sunday, at about the same time again, I heard a noise as if someone had

* When questioned, Sister Saint Marcellinus fully confirmed the truth and exactitude of this account, and after Sister Gertrude Mary’s death she wrote and signed an attestation.

thrown a shoe down from a height. I am quite certain that I was not asleep. The memory of my pupil came to me, and I prayed for her.

I had already believed that our Lord willed that I should be connected with the dear souls in Purgatory. . . . I do not ask this of Him, for very soon I should be overcome by fear. I want very much to pray for them, but I do not ask to see them, and certainly not with my bodily eyes. Last night, among the souls of the elect whom I saw mounting to Heaven, I looked for my little X——, but I did not see her. Perhaps she has not yet paid all her debt. Perhaps I am even the cause of her being in Purgatory. Perhaps I may have given her scandal. Who can tell? When I think of the sins I may have made my sisters, or the children, or any other souls, commit, I am veritably tormented in my mind; and I ask myself if I shall meet those sins again when I am before the judgment-seat of God.

May 13, 1907.—I was saying my Rosary, when suddenly I found myself in a place which I do not know whether to call a field or a

garden ; it was both. I should describe it as follows : In the centre, a field, about the size of our lawn, entirely covered with magnificent wheat in the blade. All round it were beautiful flower-beds, filled with the most varied kinds of fine flowers. The field of wheat was separated from them by beautiful walks covered with sand. In one of these I saw the Blessed Virgin, my dear Mother, in Heaven. I saw her, and found myself near her. O dear good Mother, I wish I could contemplate you already in the glories of eternity ! After I had walked with her alone for some time, a companion came to join us—a gracious and beautiful Child, Who slipped quietly between the Blessed Virgin and myself. He gave His right hand first to His Mother, and then His left to His unworthy spouse. My soul was filled with astonishment, admiration, and humility . . . but I did not hesitate to take His hand. . . . Simplicity is pleasing to this Great God Who makes Himself so little. But what an astounding spectacle it was !—Jesus, and Mary, and a poor sinner like myself in their society. Was it really true ? Was it not an illusion of the imagination ? I had in

no way made any preparations for this heavenly visit, neither by thought, nor reading, nor anything else. It presented itself quite suddenly to my soul, and I think it will not be easily effaced from my memory. When Jesus had taken my hand, I presumed to ask Him to speak to me, to instruct me. He replied: "Purgatory is My Mother's Kingdom." And He made me understand in the following words: "I have given My Mother My Own Power over these suffering souls. On her, in some measure, depends their deliverance. She applies, as she pleases, the prayers which are offered for them." This is the reason. No grace is given to us on earth which does not pass through Mary's hands. It is this dear Mother who, after having distributed to these souls the graces they needed on earth, helped them to profit by them, and then led them to this place, where they suffer, it is true, but from which they will come out to the enjoyment of God. Mary has far greater power over them here. One might say that Jesus confides all souls to her anew when they enter Purgatory. Here they are the subjects of the Queen of Heaven; and when

they shall have been made absolutely pure, Mary will call them; she will go herself to Purgatory to find them, and present them to Her Divine Son, and bring them into the heavenly dwelling-places.

I learn these lessons from those words of Jesus: *Firstly*, that I ought to pray much for these dear souls; that we shall all give great joy to the Blessed Virgin by praying for her *subjects*. *Secondly*, I learn this other lesson from the heavenly visit: that we never ask Mary for Jesus that she does not give Him to us. How many times in the day have I said, "Dear Mother, give Jesus to me"; and each time the interior voice has replied, "You have Him always with you." And then I have taken my refrain again: "Give my Jesus to me."

Yes, it is Mary, who gives Jesus to us, and she gives Him always when we ask her and sigh ardently after the Well-Beloved. On November 1, 1907, I had a great joy to offer to God. At the moment of Benediction, our dear Lord told me that on the evening of this great day there was a great banquet in Heaven, at which the newly-elect were present. These newly-elect are the souls who have entered

Paradise from Purgatory that day. It is by their entry that Jesus, as it were, completes the Feast of all Saints. There are always some souls who enter on that day, but not always the same number; that depends, our Lord said, on the prayers addressed to Him for the souls in Purgatory. The more one prays—above all, if one prays with fervour—the more deliverances one obtains, and the greater the number of the newly-elect. Since I knew this, I have prayed far better; for I desired to bring many souls, or at least to help so far as I could to bring them, to this entrance into Heaven. I did not know the hour at which it took place, but a little before eight in the evening I saw, as it were, thick clouds rising up from some low-lying place, and ascending. This went on for a long while; and I knew by this intellectual vision that the souls in Purgatory were then entering Heaven. The vision seemed to last a long while (though it really only took an instant), to show the great number of souls who were on their way to eternal happiness.

Will you allow me, my Father, to offer everything for the souls in Purgatory, on the condition that they concern themselves with

the glory of God upon earth, and the interests of Jesus? I have agreed with our Lord that, at each beat of my heart, I will have the intention of renewing the offering of His Precious Blood. It gives our Lord great pleasure when we pray for the souls in Purgatory, because there are souls particularly dear to Him in this place of expiation. He wants them in His Paradise, but His Justice prevents Him from having them there yet. There is, if I may dare to say so, a sort of combat between His Justice and His Love, and His Justice carries the day. The prayers made for them to-day (All Souls' Day) have quite another value from those of any other day, because to-day these are the universal prayers of the Church.

November 3, 1907.—After the elevation, I saw a great number of souls going up to Heaven from Purgatory. May they glorify God for us, and for all souls on earth! I do not disquiet myself at all about Purgatory. Formerly I had such confidence in the goodness and mercy of the Sacred Heart, that I thought that Divine Heart would make my Purgatory. During times of trial this confidence had quite disappeared, and had given place to fear—

a terrible fear ; but the confidence has come back to me. The Sacred Heart will make my Purgatory, and I will throw myself, gently and quietly, into the arms of my Sovereign Judge.

CHAPTER VI

THE SAINTS

January 12, 1907.—The good God came to me yesterday evening. All the day I had felt Him near me, and at the hour I tell you of He came very quickly, but I kept Him waiting. This is a bad habit I give way to under pretext of finishing my prayers.

I was at first invited to sit down at the table of the Father of the Family. After this great feast, in which all the Heavenly Court took part, God the Father said to the Son : “ I desire that our little earthly daughter be presented this very evening to her Heavenly Mother, the Angels, and all the Saints.” Then, turning to me, He said : “ Each time that you wish to enter into communication with the dear Mother of Heaven, and with each of My Saints and Angels, you can do so without need of any words. You need only

turn your thoughts towards My Word, Who will at once communicate your desires to them, and will give them your messages."

Leaving the Society of the Adorable Trinity, and yet not leaving it at all, I was first of all presented to the Blessed Virgin, then to Saint Michael, who seemed to occupy a place in Heaven by himself. After that I went through the ranks of the Angels and the Saints.

God the Father seemed to love me more than usual this morning. I have guessed why. It is because, being in great suffering, I am more like His Son. "O my God and Father, grant that my likeness to Jesus may grow and develop more and more--through suffering, but above all, more than all, through love."

After Holy Communion, Jesus said to me: "What do you wish for to-day?" "What I desire, my Jesus, is love, love, love. The more suffering one has, the more true generous love one should have. And I want love, not only for myself, but for the whole world. How I should like to gain for Thee all the souls who do not love Thee!"

At that moment, the Angels and Saints rejoiced for me because of a favour I was about to receive. Several times during the day I remained some minutes with them. That thick veil, which had prevented my seeing them clearly the first day, seemed to have disappeared in order to permit me to enter into more direct relation with the blessed Spirits and the Saints. I think it was they who brought me the perfumes from Heaven, which must have been the favour reserved for me, for which they were rejoicing in the morning, and which I received in the afternoon.

All at once, as we were finishing the Rosary, an odour of fresh violets spread itself all round me. I looked to see where it could come from, and I saw nothing to indicate that it was brought by any one of the Sisters. We had been twenty minutes in chapel, and I had smelt nothing till now. The odour became more and more agreeable; it was as if we were in a bed of violets. This lasted for perhaps four or five minutes. The same thing happened again at the beginning of the *Magnificat*, and lasted about the same time.

Both times I enjoyed the sight of the Angels and Saints, who expressed the same joy as in the morning.

January 22, 1907.—The Heavenly Father was desirous of hearing the voice of His child. Before two this morning He knocked at the door of her heart, and kept her awake, so that she could render Him her homage. I had gone to sleep occupied with the thought of the Infinite tenderness of the Father for His only Son, and the immense joy which this dearly-loved Son gave Him. I woke up still full of this thought. Then I began to pray at some length, and, I think, with devotion. I felt I must pray, and I was helped. The day was thus prepared; the union became more intense, though less sensibly felt than usual.

Directly the Elevation took place, I had knowledge of the Divine Repast prepared for me by the Angels and Saints. At that moment I began to enjoy their presence, and that of the Blessed Virgin, but it was not she who prepared the Feast. I understood that she is Mother and Queen, and the Angels and Saints the servants of the Great King.

After Communion, their presence became

more sensible, and at two separate times it was as if they were passing before me, or, rather, before their King, diffusing very sweet heavenly perfumes.

These perfumes are not a sign of union with God, it is true; but for me they are the ordinary *announcement* of a closer union—more liberal on the part of God; more generous on the part of the soul.

I must live already in the other world, with the souls in Purgatory, with the Angels, the Saints, the Adorable Trinity Itself. And in order to do this I must at this present moment give myself up entirely to grace, and faithfully follow the motions of the Holy Spirit.

When I reached the chapel for Holy Mass, I knew interiorly that I was going to enter into direct communication with the Angels and Saints, so that I may know them all when I get to Heaven. They asked, “Is she coming with us?” and my Heavenly Father answered, “Soon.”

I love the Saints so much. I love to increase their happiness, and I try to do so; but it is strange how there are some for whom I feel a particular devotion, without knowing them. I

think this comes from our Lord, Who wills that I should have a special connection with certain of His Saints. I asked Him about it a little while ago, and why I felt this preference . . . and how I must understand this acquaintance which I shall have with each of the Saints when I have reached Heaven. Here is what I believe to have been our Lord's reply: "You will know my Saints, and each of them in particular. You will have special relations with each, according to the measure in which you have contributed to increase their glory." *

Since then I have had a much keener desire of increasing the glory of the Saints. I think it must be the same with the Angels. When I feel my powerlessness I address myself to the Word in these terms: "I wish to say something good and beautiful to each of Thy Angels and Thy Saints. I pray Thee, speak for me." And I am sure that Jesus grants my desire.

In Heaven we shall praise God for His own sake, because of His Infinite perfections and for all the benefits He has bestowed on us.

* Doubtless by increasing their *accidental* glory.

But we shall praise Him also for all the benefits bestowed on all His elect ; and surely we shall praise Him for each other ? I rejoice to think that all the Saints and all the elect will praise God for me throughout eternity, for all the signal favours which He gives me now at this present time. Yes, it rejoices me, and it seems to me that *I* shall praise Him with all my heart for all the favours He has accorded to all His elect. This will be the perpetual praise of Heaven. And what could be sweeter ? How we shall praise God when all His Divine Tendernesses shall be revealed to us ! O God, teach us to praise Thee for them even here and now.

CHAPTER VII

THE ANGELS

DURING Mass my soul enjoyed a magnificent sight. I want to describe it to you that I may give a little joy to Jesus, Who makes Himself our daily Victim on the Altar, and to augment the happiness of the Angels who assist with us at this great Sacrifice. I saw at the side of each of my Sisters her Angel Guardian. So many religious, so many heavenly spirits always prostrate before the Divine Majesty! Oh, if it were given us to consider attentively this Divine spectacle, how recollected we also should be! How well we should pray! How few distractions we should have, and how soon they would be driven away!

I saw also a considerable number of other celestial spirits surrounding the Altar. Who can tell the profound adoration of these holy

intelligences? Who can tell their fervour, or the flames which burst from them? Although all these blessed spirits were wrapped in profound adoration, yet those who surrounded the Altar, the choir of Thrones, appeared the most penetrated and filled with fear and respect, if I may so speak. It would seem that the nearer one approaches to the Eternal and the Infinite, the more one is seized with admiration and wonder, but, above all, with reverential fear and holy trembling awe. Even the heavenly spirits, these ministers of the Lord, these friends of God, these creatures who approach nearest to Him, even they are seized with awe. And what of ourselves? What of myself? I, who am so wanting in respect, so little penetrated with the thought of the greatness of God!

But I am wandering from my subject. The Angel Guardian of the celebrant followed his every movement; the heavenly messenger accomplished the liturgical rites with the priest. And now to rise from earth to Heaven: Heaven was open. The Adorable Trinity was, so to speak, bending down to earth. The most abundant sources of grace flowed all through

the Mass. At the *Sanctus*, the angelic choirs united themselves to the heavenly spirits who were assisting at the great Sacrifice, and they altogether began to sing in a concert of melody. Both choirs repeated the *Sanctus*. At the solemn moment of the Elevation, all the heavenly spirits bowed profoundly, or, rather, they prostrated themselves. (What a beautiful sight! The Adorable Victim descends upon the Altar, and the Heavenly Father regards with complacency His Well-Beloved Son; contemplates with Love His Word, equal to Himself, Who has made Himself like unto us!) This lasted until the end of the Mass. May we one day contemplate the Adorable Trinity, in the company of the Angels, and sing with those blessed spirits the Eternal Hosanna. Meanwhile, may we be enabled to pray as they do! . . .

How sweet it is to know how the Angels, these ministers of the Heavenly Court, concern themselves about us! This is a consolation for every soul who suffers; for every soul of whom God demands sacrifices and privations.

The privation of Mass and Holy Communion is always a very painful one to me; but I felt

it more keenly than ever this morning, and so our Lord, Who is always so kind, sent me His Angel at the time of Mass ; or, rather, He sent him to my Angel Guardian. I was praying our Lady, my good Angel, and all my patron Saints, to assist at Holy Mass in my place, when I saw our Lord send one of the ministers of His Court to my good Angel. He was holding in his hand a golden chalice ; and I knew he was the Angel of sacrifices and privations.

At the command of their Lord, these ministers of the Great King, the Angels of Sacrifice, pass through the world, and gather up from each Angel Guardian whatever he himself has gathered from the soul entrusted to him, and then they return to the Eternal.

I thanked our Lord for having made known to me the Angel of Sacrifice, and for making me enter into relations with him. I desire that every soul should know him in a special manner, and should wish to give him a good harvest.

Twice to-day I have enjoyed the sight of the good Angels ; the first time was when you entered the room for the Instruction. I prayed

all our good Angels to salute yours, and I saw them all respectfully bow themselves before the priest and his Angel Guardian. The second time was during our spiritual reading.* The Altar was surrounded by a legion of blessed spirits. Some, nearest the Tabernacle, came and went, and seemed to incense the Altar; others, still more numerous, remained prostrate on the Altar steps. O happy spirits, lend me your ardour!

November 6, 1907.—After dinner, when the spouse of the Word had just arrived in the house of her Spouse, the Angels surrounded her, and remained near her for some moments. The next day they returned. . . . During my visit to the Blessed Sacrament I felt once more that the Lord's Angels were around me, introduced by the Angel Gabriel. What were they doing? Adoring the Word, their King and their God.

(Relating these hitherto unrecorded facts, Sister Gertrude Mary mentions in particular the following marvellous favour:)

The Angel Gabriel is like a third Angel

* On Sunday the Spiritual Reading takes place in the chapel.

Guardian to me. He is at my disposal; this is the exact expression of the Divine Master. On Thursday, November 7, Jesus, the Word Incarnate, said to me: "The Angel Gabriel is at your disposal." Oh, what happy words! O heavenly messenger, can I then really charge thee with all my messages to the Eternal Father, to the Word, and the Holy Spirit? and wilt Thou find my Mother, the Blessed Virgin, and speak to her for me? Yes, and then thou wilt return to me, and then go to thy brethren the Angels, and to all the Saints of Paradise, and come back once again to me!

I make good use of the permission granted to me. I was going to say, "I exercise all my rights over the heavenly ambassador"; but no, I will not use that expression. I would rather say, "I keep him well employed." In the early morning it is he who takes the "Good-morning" (the *Ave*) of the child to her Beloved Father, the "Good-morning" of the spouse to her Divine Bridegroom, the "Good-morning" of the soul to her Heavenly Friend. He transmits, so to speak, the kiss of the child to the Father, to the Bridegroom, to

the Heavenly Friend. Then he goes to find Mother Mary, and to her also he carries a kiss and a "Good-morning" from her child. Finally, he goes to his brethren the Angels and Saints, and salutes them for the spouse of the Word, then comes back to her, and continues all day to carry out her wishes.

(Sister Gertrude Mary writes of this Archangel :)

I live with him as with a brother. It is my Master's will. Our Lord told me that my relations with the Angel Gabriel were to be those of brother and sister. What a brother Jesus has given me, and what a connection He has established between us two !

I will try to love this dear brother well, at the same time showing him great respect.

(The Feast of Saint Gertrude falls in November. Our Lord willed that this religious who so worthily bore her great name should have great joy on that day.) Our Lord said to me : "I will that this Feast should be for you, My spouse . . . there shall be no sadness for you to-day."

In the evening I saw the Feast of Saint Gertrude come to an end with great sorrow.

I told our Lord, Who replied: "I will continue it for you by my Angel Gabriel, who will take your place near your patroness, and present your homage to her."

How good Jesus is! and how He yields to all our desires—I had nearly said, all our caprices! Here is another proof of this. I was thinking of my own little earthly mother, and asking Jesus to console her, and He said: "I will send her My Angel Gabriel." And I felt interiorly that the Angel went to her. When one is so well heard, so well served, one desires still greater things; and Jesus reads these desires in the depths of the soul. "To whom else do you wish Me to send him?" And I said: "To such a person." It was a little after seven o'clock at night. Did this person realize the Angel's visit? It is quite certain that he went to see her.

As a bouquet for the Feast, our Lord made me a magnificent promise, sweet and consoling—the promise of special aid from Saint Gabriel at the hour of my death. What a joy to have this well-beloved brother with me in my last moments, and what a favour! In return I promise to honour him in a special

manner every day. Saint Gabriel is always a faithful friend to me, a devoted brother. Yesterday morning he came to me when I went into the infirmary tribune for Mass. I saw him—with the eyes of my soul—walking before me in the little dark gallery which leads to it. When we reached the door, the heavenly messenger allowed Jesus to pass in first. He deigned to accompany me, or rather he accompanied the Word, adoring Him, till we reached my place. He genuflected with me, moved the prie-dieu chair to allow Jesus to pass, and then placed himself near me. How I should like to pray as well as my Angel brother!

Before coming to his sister on earth, the Angel Gabriel had been to visit the dear souls in Purgatory. He had been to pour upon these suffering souls the Blood of Jesus, according to a desire which his sister had expressed. The same day, at three o'clock, an inspiration came to me, that of placing myself at the gates of Hell, to prevent souls from entering in. I was in the chapel, and I said to our Lord: "I wish that not one single soul may fall into Hell this evening. O my God, I wish it." But then I thought that I must

not be alone at the entrance of this accursed place, and I prayed my heavenly brother to come with me, and to keep close to me. Many times since, souls have been on the point of falling into the eternal gulf, but we have prevented them. The Word, present in my soul, was there with His Angel. I have offered, and I still offer, the Blood of Jesus to prevent souls falling into Hell, and I offer it also for the prevention of mortal sin.

(Sister Gertrude Mary tells us that on November 21, 1907, she had received the favour of an alliance with the Holy Spirit, but one element had been lacking to her joy. She had seen the Blessed Virgin, and many of the Saints and Angels, but not the Angel whom she so loved, and whose absence she was unable to explain. In the evening she was tormented by an uneasiness which amounted to painful anguish; she wondered if she had been the sport of the Devil.)

In my suffering, when I was in chapel, I called my brother from Paradise: "Where art thou, whom Heaven gave to be my brother? Thou dost seem to hide thyself." Then the Angel Gabriel, clothed with a beauty

and splendour such as I had never seen, appeared to me, saying, "I am here." Then I knew that he was clothed with this splendour to celebrate the spiritual marriage of his earthly sister. I did not long enjoy his presence. I only, as it were, dimly perceived its resplendent beauty.

(On November 25, she heard the Angels singing the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, and *Sanctus*. She states that a great number of Angels surrounded the Altar, and all prostrated themselves at the moment of the *Confiteor*. She continues:)

After the Communion it seemed to me that I knew that many Angels surrounded the soul who had just communicated. They remained near to her so long as the Sacred Species were unconsumed. At the moment when I had this knowledge given me, I was returning from the Holy Table myself; and I saw by intellectual vision the Angel Gabriel walking before me, and on either side of me were my own two good Angels.

(It will be remembered that Sister Gertrude Mary had charged the Archangel Gabriel to repeat the *Ave*, which he so well knows how to say, to the Blessed Trinity for her every

morning. On December 11, she received a sweet answer.)

December 11, 1907.—This day opened for me with the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

When my beloved brother went to present the morning greeting of the child to her Father, of the spouse to her Bridegroom, of the soul to her Divine Friend, God said to the heavenly messenger: "Take Our Blessing to her."

(Some days after this, the poor Sister, unable by then to write more than a few words, wrote: "I have seen the Angel Gabriel at the moment of Benediction.")

As her illness increased, Sister Gertrude Mary had to lay down her pencil altogether, but not before she had confided to her note-book these lines, which give the answer to the painful thought that she was unable any longer to honour Jesus, always present in her, as she had done before.)

"I have been given the knowledge that Saint Gabriel and my two good Angels have taken my place, and adore for me the Blessed Sacrament always present within me."

CHAPTER VIII

THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN

IN my childhood, Mother Mary spoilt me as much as Jesus did. What graces I received through her !

April 30, 1897.—At the moment when the Church Militant began to render to Mary that special worship which lasts a whole month, the glory of this dear Mother was increased. Heaven united with Earth to sing the praises of their sweet Queen, and Jesus said :

“My Mother, what do you ask of me?” For Mary prays for all sinners, for the just, for all men ; and for those souls whom Jesus especially loves. Showing me to her, my Well-Beloved repeated : “What do you wish for this soul who is dear to Me?” “Ah !” I cried, “obtain for me, my Mother, an ardent love for my God, and the love of renunciation and abnegation ; for these two loves are but one.”

End of April, 1899.—"Tell me, Jesus, in Communion and in Meditation, what will give pleasure to my Mother during her month? and tell me, dear Mother, what will please thy Divine Son? I wish to be acceptable to my tender Mother and my beloved Brother Jesus."

Jesus replied in Communion: "Reproduce in your life the virtues of your Mother. Do every action in union with her. Let this beautiful model be always before your eyes, so that you may become so like her as to be her living copy."

Jesus replied in my Meditation:

"Apply yourself above all to resemble My Mother in her generosity, her resignation, her patience. Never complain of the little pains which I send you; and if you could never let it be suspected that you are suffering, that would glorify Me yet more."

The Blessed Virgin replied during the Divine Office:

"Thank Jesus for all the graces which He gave me; for all my fidelity in responding, and for all the graces which He has given to souls in reply to my requests."

Directly I reach the Holy Table, it seems

to me that I love Jesus better. I never go alone. The Blessed Virgin always accompanies me. If only this dear Mother would give me a spark of her love, how happy I should be!

The dominant feeling in my soul is one of joy. This is one of the Feasts of my Mother. "O Mother! I rejoice with thee, for thee, and in thee."

I truly believe that I love the most Blessed Virgin more and more. My heart throbs with joy whenever I think of her. And I long to give her pleasure; to do this, I will practise her virtues and pray much to her.

Yesterday evening (October 26, 1907), at the hour of my most intimate conversation with our Lord, the hour of saying good-night to each other, I said to Him: "Lord, the day is not yet ended; it lasts till midnight. Continue, I pray Thee, to pour Thy graces upon the three Kingdoms of Thy Holy Church until that hour." Then, changing my mind, I thought: "Why not ask Jesus to begin again to-morrow, or, rather, never to leave off pouring down His graces? To-morrow is the Feast of His Mother; * would

* The Patronage of Our Lady.

He not be glad to be generous on that day too?" And so I did ask this. Jesus did not answer at once. The next morning He said: "It is on My Mother's account that I grant you this—in her honour." Then I knew that He was continuing to diffuse His graces in great abundance; and I knew too that I still owned the Heart of Jesus, and that of Mary also—that Jesus had placed my heart between these two Sacred Hearts. How can my poor heart help growing warm between them? and warmth is not enough . . . it must *burn* with the fire of Divine love.

I had begun the Rosary, during which Jesus came more than once to caress His child. His Mother appeared to be happier at this than the child herself. Thank you, Mother Mary!

Since I became the spouse of the Word, I cannot tell you what I feel when I finger my Rosary, especially during the night. I seem to be touching my Mother herself. It is like the happiness of a child who feels his mother's hand in his own.

January 25, 1907.—This evening I heard Jesus say: "Would you like to come for a little walk in Paradise?"

“I should indeed, my Jesus.”

I crossed the little space which separated us, and Jesus came nearer. Then I objected: “But, Lord, I have not finished the Rosary, there is still a whole chaplet to say.” “The Angels will say it for you,” He replied. At that instant, the angelic choirs began *Hail Mary*. These sweet sounds appeared to be far off; but little by little they came nearer, and then I saw the Blessed Virgin, all dressed in blue, descend with radiant majesty, surrounded by an innumerable company of the blessed spirits singing *Hail Mary*. How beautiful she was, my Queen and my Mother! If an imaginary vision, a feeble image of her, reveals so much beauty, so much grace, what will it be like in Heaven, when we shall possess the reality, and contemplate it with our eyes, and love her with hearts made Divine, if I may dare to say so?

I draw two practical conclusions from this favour—Firstly, to learn from the heavenly spirits to say *Ave Maria* as it should be said. Secondly, to learn from them also to obey the orders—nay, the wishes of God. The Angels did not wait for the order to greet our

Lady for me. At the moment when our Lord told me His desire they knew it, and carried it out at once.

This is not what I do. I bargain with God. I seek my own little interests, instead of immediately giving myself up to His desires, to His orders.

Ah! when shall I be as faithful as the good Angels, those wonderful models for all consecrated souls? I am touched by their promptitude. At the very moment when our Lord formed this desire—if I may so speak—they knew it and accomplished it. To know and to carry out are one and the same thing for them.

Never have I greeted the most Blessed Virgin with so much love as to-day; never before did I feel what I felt to-day in pronouncing those words, *Hail Mary*. I was greeting a Mother, and the Mother of God. I continue to say the Rosary in union with the Angels. With the first *Ave Maria*, I salute Mary with the Seraphim, as the well-loved Daughter of the Father; with the second *Ave Maria*, I salute her with the Cherubim, as the most tender Mother of the



CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES (INTERIOR).

Within the enclosure of Saint Charles.



Son ; with the third *Ave Maria*, I salute her with the Thrones, as the most gentle Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

I continue to salute her in this way under these her three titles, with the Dominations, the Principalities, etc. . . .

With the last *Ave Maria* of each decade, I salute my Mother with the entire Heavenly Court, as the Queen of all the Angels, and of all men.

O Mother, obtain for all thy children to live by Jesus, and for Jesus alone.

The Church Militant is keeping thy Feast to-day, dearly loved Mother, but how far grander is the Feast being kept in Paradise. What joy thou art both receiving and giving, dearest Mother ! The soul for whom Heaven has opened itself to-day has some faint idea of what this joy is.* It is written : “ All the glory of the King’s daughter is within.” But this beauty shines forth in the exterior also. How I wish I could tell the whole world how beautiful thou art, Mother dearest ! Thy interior beauty is reflected in thy exterior, and gives to thy whole person a marvellous

* Feast of the most holy Rosary.

splendour. How beautiful Mary is . . . and I notice with pleasure and joy that she is very young. What a countenance hers is! She appears to me to-day as a Queen, of the most ravishing beauty, with a goodness which attracts and charms me, of exceptional majesty and grace. She is clothed with an incomparable glory . . . she is a Queen of the most dazzling beauty. This is not enough to say ; but I can find no words to express her loveliness. How beautiful, how beautiful she is, my Mother Mary ! Unable to reveal all her beauty, unable even to give the faintest idea of it, of the splendour of which I have been shown only a glimpse, my heart seems to find relief in repeating often, "How beautiful Mary is !"

I would that it were given to some souls, to many souls, to see the most Blessed Virgin as I saw her to-day, and as I see her still at this moment.

They are keeping such a grand Feast in Paradise ! To-day is an incomparably more beautiful Feast than Sunday last (Feast of St. Michael the Archangel). This is not merely the Feast of the heavenly hosts, it

is that of the Queen of Angels, the Feast of the most holy Rosary. The Angel Gabriel accompanies Mary everywhere ; he is quite near to her, and the beauty and glory of his Queen is reflected upon him. O Gabriel, how beautiful thou art, clothed with a ray of Mary's beauty ! And it is indeed meet that thou shouldest be honoured on this day, since thou wert the first to greet Mary. Thou gavest the salutation of the Adorable Trinity to her who was to be the Mother of the Incarnate Word.

Upon this glorious Feast in honour of Mary, Jesus seems to efface Himself, so as to leave all the honours to His Mother. She is always Queen and Sovereign, but to-day she appears more so than usual. Accompanied by the heavenly messenger, the Angel Gabriel, Mary visits each of the elect in particular. To better express my thought, and what I have seen, I should say that each of the elect has had more joy in the Blessed Virgin to-day. She has given herself in a greater degree to each one. She has made them participate more fully in her own happiness. The Angels, the Saints, and all the blessed have offered to their

Queen, under the emblem of sweet-smelling roses, all the *Aves* that have been recited since the salutation of the Angel Gabriel. Each *Ave* makes a rose open wide. And who can count the number of *Aves* which the faithful of all times have sent up from their hearts? who can tell the beauty of the incalculable number of these mystic roses, which all Heaven presented to Mary? or the sweet odour diffused by them in the Heavenly Home? I could have believed myself to be in the midst of vast gardens, filled with rose trees in full flower, each vying with the others in the sweetness of its perfume. At the moment of writing, I seem still to breathe these heavenly perfumes; and yet the Feast is ended.

I was so joyful when I heard our Sisters sing Vespers; because these sacred songs are the songs of Paradise. There are some in honour of Mary, just as there are some in honour of God. The *Sanctus* is the Song of God Himself; of the Infinite. The *Ave Maria* is the song of the Blessed Virgin. Both are a perpetual praise which the elect love to offer to their King and Queen.

At a little distance from these sweet-smelling roses of Heaven, I perceived some faded roses. I looked quickly away from them ; for I understood the lesson at once ; and I made the resolution to recite the *Hail Mary* with great fervour. Our Lord has asked of me fifteen acts of virtue each day, in honour of the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary. In my turn, I asked Him, through our Lady of the most holy Rosary, to give me as many souls as there are *Aves* recited during the day. I would that all the world loved the good God. In the afternoon I heard a crowd of people given up to their pleasures. I was moved with compassion, and said to myself : “ Poor souls, how much you are to be pitied ! You do not think of Him Who so loves you ; you do not concern yourselves at all about Him. He asks of you only one day out of seven, and you pass that day in forgetfulness of your God, and often in sin.”

Jesus asked me to make reparation as far as possible, by continuous praise, for the numberless blasphemies of the world. Jesus seemed so sad !

I had such a strong desire to make reparation

with a generous love, that, not finding sufficient in myself, I addressed myself to the Blessed Virgin, to this dear Mother who showed me so much affection; when Jesus presented me to His Father, she was there. As my answer, I saw the heart of Mary, pierced with a sword, and I understood. I offered the sacred ardour which consumed the heart of Mary to make up for my own want of love.

This was not all. My sweet and kind little Brother Jesus was there. He rejoiced at giving joy to His little sister. When the moment had come, almost at the beginning of the Rosary, He showed Himself. Dear Child Jesus, I see Thee, I contemplate Thee, I adore Thee, I love Thee. He appeared at my right hand; then placed both His little Hands on my knees, and watched me while I prayed to His Mother. After some moments passed like this, with our two hands close to each other, and our lips almost touching, Jesus sat down on the prie-dieu chair before me; and there He remained till the end of the chaplet. I feel that I shall never forget this incident, and that I shall never see this spot without being affected; and, more than all, that I shall never

take my place here without praying better. My fervour will always revive here.

While Jesus remained there like this, quite close to me, He answered one of the questions I had asked Him: "How canst Thou make Thyself so little, Thou Who art so great?"

"I make Myself quite little, so that you may never be afraid of Me again."

CHAPTER IX

WITH THE CHILD JESUS

I AM labouring to make Jesus grow in my soul. You, my Father, replied to a desire of our Lord in showing me the way to do this.

I live in very great intimacy with the Child Jesus. When I am ready to begin any prayer or work, I say to him: "Come, little Jesus, please come; let us pray together," or "we will work together." Everything which is done with Jesus must, I think, be well done. If any difficulty comes up during the work, which often happens, I say to Him: "Little Jesus, Thou knowest better than I; please do the difficult part, or rather help me to do it. I will not let Thee work quite alone."

In my prayer, if a distraction comes to trouble me, I say to Him: "Little Jesus, please make reparation quickly, and let us pray together."

When I am suffering, which sometimes happens, I tell Him my suffering, but I do not invite Him to share it. On the contrary, I say : "Little Jesus, I do not wish to see Thee suffer. I want to console Thy sweet and beloved Heart."

While thus living simply and intimately with the Child Jesus, I remain deeply penetrated with the sense of His greatness. He is the Word, the Thought, the Speech of the Father. He is infinitely wise, infinitely powerful, infinitely holy—equal in all things to His Father.

Although I find happiness and joy in living in the intimacy of this Divine Child, yet for all that I feel some repugnance. Nature revolts, and experiences repulsion and fear ; then I say to myself : "I am thinking of myself at this moment. If I put Jesus in the place of self, I should fear neither suffering nor humiliations." And I take fresh courage at the thought of Jesus.

After the pleasant and interesting performance* on Sunday, I have longed to tell you

* A phonograph performance given to the children at the workroom.

all the joy I felt on hearing little Jesus spoken of. Many times during the fortnight which preceded it I had asked the Divine Child to preside. Such a sweet and lovable Guest!—Who does not take up any room among us, Who makes no noise, and Who nevertheless acts upon our souls. I want to be the joy of Christ, of my little Jesus. . . . I will pray a great deal to the Venerable Mother Agnes of Jesus.* Her sweet familiarity with the Child Jesus pleases and rejoices me. She is a sort of tonic to me, a stimulant to the attraction I feel to intimacy with Him. I do not pretend to favours such as those which this holy religious obtained, but I desire to love Jesus more and more, and I want my love to be very real. The more a soul loves Jesus, the more she loves His Angels and His Saints. The more a soul lives with Jesus, the more she lives with those whom He loves in Heaven. Many times during the day I say: “My Jesus, make the seed grow which Thou hast sown in these souls.”

Christmas has come! What pleasure can Jesus find in descending into my soul—poorer,

* Her Confessor had spoken of her.

more miserable than the crib? And yet, nevertheless, I love our *great* Jesus—our *little* Jesus—very much. I pray the most Blessed Virgin to make my dwelling less unworthy of her Divine Son. When Jesus comes forth from the Tabernacle, either for a long Exposition, or simply to give us His Benediction, I never want to see Him shut Himself up again in His prison of love. To-day I desired more than usual to prevent Him re-entering His Tabernacle. I told Him both my regret and my desire, and all at once a beautiful Child of seven or eight years old came towards me, threw Himself into my arms, remained there for some moments, and then, by a miracle which I cannot understand any more than I can clearly describe the way in which it was effected, this beautiful Child entered into my heart to make it His dwelling-place. I can see Him. I can contemplate Him there.

I so love to see Jesus as a Child. Each time that I see Him under this form, and at other times also, I remember with happiness and gratitude three visits of the Divine Child to me.

The first was on December 7, 1903. I was

in the little chapel belonging to the workroom. (I received so many graces in that little chapel.) I was on my knees saying the Rosary, and in this position my beads were hanging over the back of the chair in front of me. Suddenly I felt a gracious and charming Child draw near me, Who began to tell them with me. It was so charming and so sweet to see the Child Jesus following the beads with His little finger, as an ordinary child does who takes his mother's Rosary while she is saying it, and runs through all the beads one after the other. Jesus remained thus standing near me till I had finished praying. I went downstairs, losing sight of my beautiful Child, and began to trace out some embroidery. And soon after I saw my little Jesus bending sweetly and graciously over my work, leaning His little arms on the table where I was. Having first gazed at me, He took the end of the pencil I was using, and followed all the lines as I traced them. O Holy Child Jesus! surely on that day Thou didst enkindle my prayer and bless my work!

Another day (in the month of March of the year following—1904), at a time of great

interior trial, I went down to the chapel. Jesus had remained hidden for some time. I had called Him, but He never showed Himself. When I reached about the middle of the staircase, the thought came to me to turn round, thinking He was behind me. I was not mistaken. I turned and perceived the Child Jesus a few yards away. As I paused Jesus paused also. He appeared to be waiting to continue to follow me till I began to walk on. I descended a few steps, and again turned. I saw the same vision of the Divine Child, the same waiting on His part. I pretended to begin to walk on, and turned round once more. Jesus saw me, and He also stopped still. His little foot remained, as it were, hovering ; and so long as I did not move, neither did Jesus. Then I understood that Jesus was really with me, although He neither showed Himself, nor made His presence felt, either in my prayer or in my other spiritual exercises.

March 18, 1907.—For some days past this well-beloved Word, under the form of a little Child of six or seven, has often come and thrown Himself into my arms as if He were

wanting to play with me. There He remains, waiting for me to caress Him. O dear little Jesus, how I wish I could caress Thee as Thou dost deserve ! How many caresses Thou hast given me, who deserve so little ! It has pleased Thee to take Thy endearments away : be Thou blessed for this. But give me the grace to caress Thee tenderly when it is my turn.

Jesus is reiterating His call to the life of holy familiarity with Himself. He has shown Himself under the form of a Child of about twelve. Towards five o'clock, the door of the room being open, I seemed to see Him enter in this form. He was there close to me ; and there He remained, and I heard Him asking if He might live with me always in sweetest intimacy.

Shortly after the first of His visits as a Child, as if to make easier what He asked of me, this beloved Saviour let me hear these consoling words when I was expressing my great desire for His glory : "Let it be as you desire."

I was just going to leave the chapel. I had looked towards the Tabernacle, and had said : "Au revoir, Jesus" ; and then He let me feel His presence. He showed Himself, and I felt

as though He touched me. He kept close to me while I took holy water, as if He were going to take me by the hand. Then He said, "I am going with you, little sister."

"Dear little Brother, yes. Do come with me. I promise I will not grieve Thee."

CHAPTER X

WITH THE SACRED HEART

As a religious, the devotion to the Sacred Heart greatly increased in my soul ; so much so that, in the ordinary details of life, I always had recourse to the Sacred Heart. I confided everything to this Divine Heart, and endeavoured to practise Its virtues. I was always sure of obtaining all I asked of It. I was so sure of being heard, that very often, when asking some favour of this Divine Heart, even before making my petition, I gave thanks for having received it.

How could the Sacred Heart refuse me after having received my thanksgiving? I would say : “ Lord, this is Thy affair and not mine. Wilt Thou please concern Thyself about it, and bring it to a good end ? ” After saying this, I quietly endeavoured to please Him, and I was assured of success.

1897.—“ I ask Thee, as a New Year’s gift, to give me Thy love, and the love of sacrifice ; O Divine Heart of Jesus ! I consecrate myself to Thee in a very special manner at the beginning of this New Year. I wish to live hidden in Thee.”

Our Lord replied : “ My daughter, you have given Me everything. You have sacrificed the whole of your life to Me. In return I give you all the treasures of My Heart. They are at your disposal, for yourself, and for all the souls you love, and for whom you desire great things. Henceforth you can say to Me : ‘ Jesus, I have nothing more to offer Thee, but I love this soul, these souls, I owe them gratitude, and I address myself to Thy Divine Heart, for Thou Thyself hast told me to do so.’ ”

“ Henceforth,” Jesus said, “ we two will be but one ; for I wish to share all your sorrows, your joys, and your labours.”

(At these words of the Divine Master, Sister Gertrude Mary made this holy resolution :)

“ I will henceforth never do anything without having first offered it to the Sacred Heart,

and having received Its blessing. Earthly things are now nothing to me. It is Thou alone, my Beloved, Whom I desire. O Jesus, Thou hast given me Thy Heart. Thou hast allowed me to draw from this inexhaustible source of all good things, and I come this evening to find there perfect contrition for all my faults, and an energetic desire to avoid the least trace of sin."

(The Good Master willed that she should practise the love of complacency, and be happy in the virtues of others.) He said: "Every time that any one speaks before you of a soul who is seeking to give Me pleasure, rejoice with Me, offer Me the joy and the happiness which you feel, for this will be very pleasing to Me. In return for the signal favours with which I fill your soul, I ask you to console My Heart. This is the part you have to play, My privileged spouse. You rejoice My Heart every time that you show Me gratitude for the trials which I send you. Let Me do what I will with you. Be faithful to all that I ask of you. You shall be the beloved disciple of My Heart, and I will take the entire charge of your soul."

During the sermon, my Father, when you reminded us of the happiness of the holy women, when they contemplated the pierced hands and feet of the risen Saviour, and His still open side, our Lord made me hear these words, showing me His Heart: "This is your place, My daughter."

(*April 16, 1907.*—Two days after the Feast of the Good Shepherd.) This morning, when she began her prayer, the Good Shepherd called His little lamb, and said with tenderness: "Come into My Heart." He wishes to place her in covert from the dangers of the enemy, and for this covert He offers her the safe retreat of His Sacred Heart. "O Jesus, I will never leave this dear dwelling-place."

Then I saw three splendid rays come from the Heart of Jesus, and reach me. To-day the same thing has happened again, and Jesus gave me the explanation I wished for. These three rays from the Heart of Jesus represent Faith, Hope, and Charity. In reaching me, they signify the growth of these three virtues in my soul, which I ask for many times a day.

June 6, 1907.—This day has truly been one of Divine caresses: first in acts, and then in

words. I will make the latter known, by simply repeating the words of Jesus ; as to the former, they are more difficult to reveal.

How can I express myself so as to describe them ? For instance, the growing contact of the Heart of Jesus with my poor heart. The word "contact" does not sufficiently emphasize the union, the movements of these two hearts beating one against the other, knit together by Divine love. I find no expression capable of showing what the Heart of Jesus is to a heart loved by Him. It is as if Jesus had given His Heart to me, had put it entirely at my disposal, and that this Divine Heart and mine—which is so miserable—yet formed but one. "O infinite tenderness of Jesus ! how far Thou reaches at times ! there are neither limits nor bounds to Thy goodness ; the greatness and the multitude of our miseries do not restrain Thee."

I must give up the attempt to describe these *acts* of Divine tenderness, for I am absolutely incapable of it. At the moment at which I write, I can feel them as strongly, as truly as I felt them all that day. Jesus is there. I feel Him. He is quite near to me, with the

same kindness which He showed me all the day. He is looking at me as I write, with the same tenderness as when I was before Him. I feel, so to speak, His Heart beating against mine. "O Jesus! let me not be the only soul to experience Thy caresses; make them felt by many other souls also, so that they may love Thee better. Make them felt especially by those souls who are dear to me. Above all, let us all feel them in Paradise."

During Vespers, the caresses of Jesus were still more tender. As the moment approached when the Blessed Sacrament would be enclosed once more in Its cold dwelling-place they increased, and my heart felt itself transformed by this contact with the Heart of Jesus. Could it remain cold by the side of so great a fire? It grew warm, and itself shared the tender endearments of the Divine Heart.

I said that these caresses increased. Yes; and if I could so express myself, I should say that they became so intense that Jesus did not know how to manifest them to His unworthy spouse. In speaking thus I am far from the truth, since nothing is impossible with God; but I wish to show by the expres-

sion, all the intensity, the force, and the depth of the Divine tenderness.

I so desired to contemplate Jesus longer in the Monstrance. I did not want Him to go back into His Tabernacle. And all through Benediction, and especially at the moment when it was actually given, Jesus and I exchanged such tender words. His far surpassed mine.

“Jesus, I do not want Thee to be there, in Thy cold dwelling-place. No, stay where Thou art, exposed to our view, so that I can see Thee and contemplate Thee still. I want to see Thee always. Stay, Jesus. Stay !”

“My little daughter, I am always with you. I am in your heart. I never leave you.” And Jesus pronounced these words with a kindness and tenderness which was quite maternal. I reiterated with prayer, my petitions, my supplications ; and Jesus, like a mother who wants to console her child, said with inexpressible tenderness : “My little daughter, what do you want Me to do for you more than I have done up till now ?” I answered by these words : “O Jesus, let me be all heart to love Thee, to love the Father, and the Holy Spirit.”

I cannot recall all the words which we two exchanged—two souls who understood one another, two hearts who loved one another.

This union with the Heart of Jesus, these sweet colloquies with Jesus, all these Divine favours—will they all cease with the time of Benediction? Shall I not find again, when I leave the chapel, when I am in my room, this same supernatural atmosphere, both burning and soft, which I breathed near the altar?

Oh yes! I shall find it; I have found it already, and the Divine favours have continued to flow and diffuse themselves in my soul. I needed to be alone with God, to hold converse with Him, about Himself and about souls, for in these moments of intimate communication it seems to me that I receive yet more for others than for myself; so much so, that often I ask all for other souls, and nothing for myself. The good God knows what I want—His glory only.

My two dominant thoughts at this moment are—firstly, reparation; secondly, thanksgiving. It seems to me that these have been the thought of the Church during these feasts, and all through the month of June.

I ask of God with earnestness and great desire that the kingdom of the Sacred Heart may be extended over all the earth.

October 26, 1907.—How our Lord comes to us at all times, and speaks to us at the very moment when we do not expect it! This morning, a little while after my Confession, when I was reciting more devoutly than ordinarily, I think, the Prayer of Reparation of the Guard of Honour, I heard our Lord say very distinctly: “I am going to lend you My Heart for to-day.” I stopped my prayer, and remained a little overwhelmed. At length I thanked Him, and asked to make good use of this happy good fortune, recalling the Divine Master’s words: “Ask much of Me.” And I received this gift, that I might obtain with certainty all that I should ask for others or for myself. After having remained quite a long time with our Lord, I went back to the room, all perfumed with the dear words of our Lord, and filled with His grace, which had been augmented by Confession, Communion, and other acts of devotion. While occupied with my work, praying at the same time, the thought came to me that I had not behaved

well to our Lord. I had not weighed well these words : “ I lend you My Heart.” “ No, Lord, to lend is not enough.” I said to Jesus : “ Lord Jesus, I will not give Thee back Thy Heart ; in a case like this, to lend is to give. Thou hast lent It to me, consequently Thou hast given It to me, and I will never give It back to Thee.” This is the way to behave with the good God. He loves to give Himself to us, but He also loves to be pressed to do so sometimes. I am quite sure that He had longed to give Himself altogether to me, and was waiting until I had asked Him to do so. He wanted me to say to Him : “ Not *lend*, Jesus, but *give*. O Jesus, I love playing with Thee like this ! I will admit that Thou dost like to be pressed at first, but then Thou dost give what we ask. I should not like Thee to refuse altogether.”

Having become possessor of so great a good, of such an incomparable treasure, I made good use of it all that day, and, to show me how Jesus was responding to all my desires and petitions, to show how truly He was mine, I will tell you what happened in the afternoon.

I was in the chapel at a little before three o'clock. I was on the point of bringing my visit to a close, and consequently of leaving Jesus. I thought the time had come for me to leave my Master ; but Jesus did not wish me to do so yet. Suddenly I saw a great conflagration rise up from the Heart of Jesus ; the flames mounted higher and higher, and brighter and fiercer. How beautiful it was to see ! How wonderful are the flames of Divine love ! The soul remains stunned before such a sight. She can do nothing but contemplate it at first, then she adores ; but the first sentiment that lays hold of her is one of wonder. She remains enraptured before the spectacle which cannot last, for it is not for earth ; it is reserved for Heaven, and the soul can only catch a glimpse of it here below. All this time I was on my knees in the contemplation of this mystery. I was adoring and praying, but more by silence and desire than by words.

This had lasted some moments, when I saw the flames little by little growing lower, and the conflagration nearly extinguished ; then I cried out : “ No, no, Lord ; let it not go out ; let those flames go on burning ! And then

the flames rekindled and rose up once more, and I was able to contemplate the same spectacle again for some moments.

Our Lord had heard my prayer the first time; so when the flames seemed on the point of being extinguished for the second time, I began to pray again, and to offer the Heart of Jesus to the Eternal Father through the heart of Mary. At this offering the conflagration was rekindled for the third time; more beautiful, more brilliant, more active than before. The Queen of Heaven had helped my prayer. I had been more fully heard. Thus my visit to Jesus was prolonged, but I dared not make the same demand a fourth time. When the Divine conflagration had come to an end, I quitted our Lord, keeping deeply hidden in my heart the remembrance of this great favour. The more God gives, the more the soul feels her own poverty as she is in herself; for, when she is rich in God, that is quite another matter.

I foresaw, in the near future, the triumph of the Church—how beautiful it will be, how many Saints there will be—but before then victims are needed. Then, indeed, will be the reign of the Sacred Heart. Oh, how much

I rejoice, and always shall rejoice in it. I should love, so far as it depends on me, to contribute to the extension of the Kingdom of that Divine Heart. I have for a long time been asking this in my prayer, and in Holy Communion.

Our Lord told me to-day that we “did not ask enough”; and I saw Him, this dear Saviour, with His Hands filled with graces. He is ready to pour them upon us. He only waits till we ask Him for them. After that I asked much, very much of Him. I demanded Saints of Him. I do so want them in the garden of the Church! “Holy Spirit, make such chosen souls grow there!” This thought, nay, this *knowledge*, gladdens me beyond all expression; that after the time of persecution the Church will be very flourishing. How much I long to advance this triumph by my prayers and sufferings! I desire to be a true daughter of the Church.

CHAPTER XI

AT THE SACRED TRIBUNAL

WHEN I began to make my particular examen, I was full of joy at the thought of soon receiving holy absolution ; and, instead of examining my conscience, I made a meditation upon the sacrament of Penance. I thought with happiness, how our Lord had established this sacrament as much from love of His Father as for love of men. For, if we had had no means of reconciliation after the first sin was committed, then God the Father would have been deprived of His children ; and this could not be. Our tender Father loves us too much. And for those souls who love Him more tenderly because they are purer, there was need of some means of purifying them still further, so that this beloved Father might be able to show them greater tenderness. Oh, I love, I love, I love this sacrament of Penance ! It costs me a

great deal to be so long without receiving it. I very often ask absolution from our Lord ; but I miss the self-accusation, which always costs something, and the words of the priest, which touch and move the soul, and give it fresh vigour.

Before Confession our Lord told me in what measure my soul would receive the grace of this sacrament of Penance ; and an abundant shower was poured upon my soul. At the actual moment of absolution the same prodigy was renewed.

“ I thank Thee, O my God, for Thy great mercy to me, who feel myself more and more poor and miserable. I am a sinner. I feel the need of purifying my soul. I long to see the day arrive for my Confession ; all this week I have waited for it. Confession is very profitable to me ; and I am an epicure greedy of absolution. Dear Mother Mary, vouchsafe to prepare me to receive this great grace well.”

While absolution was being given to me, I felt something of Heaven. I felt the Divine transformation taking place in me. I could have wished that the absolution could last much longer, so that I might feel the Divine

action prolong itself in my soul. I should like to have been able to say to you : “ If you only knew what is taking place in my soul at this moment ! ” My Confession finished, I should like to have spoken with you of my happiness, but with my usual want of simplicity I said nothing. During my thanksgiving I addressed myself to my Angel Guardian : “ My good Angel, in the midst of all your felicity, you have never felt what I have just been feeling, for you have never received pardon ! ”

How much I desire to keep pure after this absolution ! How much I desire to keep humble ! Jesus is increasing in my soul. I must decrease every day. To keep very pure, and to humiliate myself—these are two pressing needs of my soul.

October 26, 1907.—I was longing to make my Confession. I was feeling more than ever this need of purifying and humiliating myself, and our Lord was waiting for me to do this before giving me more graces, as He made me aware afterwards. How happy this Confession has made me ! The sole consolation which I demand and seek in Confession is

to humiliate myself. Yes, but when *I* humiliate *myself*, that is not enough. When *you* humiliate me, my Father, when you help me to humiliate myself, when you tell me how guilty I am, when you show this to me far better than I can see it for myself, then, oh, how glad I am ! To-day you and I have done a good business. You have said just what I say myself as to my faults ; and I have been so glad and happy. Yes ! show me clearly all my misery, all my ingratitude towards our Lord. Help me, I beg of you, to correct all my defects, to get rid of this evil stock-in-trade of mine, to give something to our Lord. I have asked you so often to humiliate me that you cannot refuse.

Once again, I have felt the torments of Divine love. During my Confession, and after it, I realized all the trouble which I have given to our Lord—how much, in spite of that, I am loved by Him—how little I love Him in return. And then the torments of Divine love took possession of my soul, and I suffered—suffered more than I can say, and I wept. I shed tears of repentance and love. Happy tears !

I am full of sadness when I see how little I love the good God. How I thank you for showing me my inconsiderateness towards Him. I think this Confession will do me great good. All day I have been reminding myself of what you said to me, and of this word *inconsiderateness** towards our Lord. That word went right to the depths of my soul. It wounded me to the quick. I do not mean that I was offended by it; on the contrary, I am most grateful to you for it. I mean that I have deeply felt the trouble and pain which I ceaselessly give to our Lord.

All day, that word vibrated in the ear of my heart. "O dear Jesus, in return for so much love which Thou dost shower upon Thy spouse, Thou dost receive only inconsiderateness and ingratitude!"

Once more, how I thank you for showing me my misery. I have always loved the sacrament of Penance, you know that; but now I will love it far more, and far better. I may even say that my devotion to the

* By reason of her heavenly favours, it was necessary to remind this soul of the Divine requirements, and to maintain her in the profound realization of her own littleness.

sacrament of Penance will increase, in the measure in which I humiliate myself, or am humiliated. The fruits which I gather from my Confessions will be proportionate to the humility and the repentance which I bring to the sacrament. To-day, I have enjoyed no consolation whatever; but I have felt, and still feel keenly, the pain which I cause our Lord.

Contemplating my soul bathed in the Blood of Jesus, I began to consider the sacrament of Penance. This sacrament is the reservoir of the Blood of Jesus, and His Heart is its source. How I wish that all souls should have a special devotion to this great sacrament of Divine mercy. I love to see souls near the confessional. . . . I love to see them come out. . . . I love to think of the great things which are taking place in them. I think that all through eternity I shall make a special thanksgiving for this marvel of Divine love. I have gathered great and abundant fruits from my Confessions. Ordinarily, these are more apparent than those which I gain from Holy Communion; and yet I love the Divine Eucharist, and am ready to make every sacrifice

to feed upon It daily. If I had daily Communion, and Confession as often as I desired, it seems to me that my happiness would be perfect, so far as is possible on earth. These two sources of nourishment would feed my soul so well, would fortify it in such a manner, that nothing would henceforth seem difficult to it.

I was taken, in spirit, to a confessional. The Devil was waiting at the entrance. There were a certain number of penitents; and he was making great efforts to send them away from the holy tribunal. Once inside the confessional, there was another devil who hindered them from saying everything. I prayed for all such souls, for there was more than one confessional where penitents were waiting. Our Lord took me to this one to show me the Devil's action, and to make me understand about it; more than that, to penetrate me with the conviction of the necessity of praying for all souls making their Confessions. I had great joy when I saw our Sisters near the confessional. I rejoiced at seeing the great things being done in them; at all the marvels of love being wrought. . . .

The desire to be humiliated draws me to this sacrament as much as even the grace of absolution. I should love this sacrament to continue to exist in Heaven, so that the soul could have her desire of being humiliated fulfilled.

CHAPTER XII

AT HOLY MASS

March 2, 1907.—Before the Mass began, it was given me to know, but rather confusedly and obscurely, that our Lord would pour forth a most abundant effusion of graces during the holy Sacrifice. This was, so to speak, the “passing of the Lord,” the hour of His doles. It was as if He had said to me, “Profit well by this precious moment; when it has passed, I shall stop the flow of My graces.”

Our Lord never does this unless we oblige Him to; but yet there are moments and hours in which the Divine Master allows graces to overflow upon us with an astounding abundance. And the time of holy Mass is one of those blessed hours. Jesus prays with us, and for us. How then could our prayers go unanswered? When I offer Jesus to the

Eternal Father, it seems to me that I have the right to all heavenly blessings, to all spiritual riches. It seems to me that I am able to do something for the whole Church. Yesterday, I prayed especially for all lukewarm souls; to-day for those souls who ought to draw nearer to Jesus, to live in a greater intimacy with Him—those who are more delicate towards Him, who feel more keenly than others the pain given to Him, and who are called to console Him in a greater measure. In a word, for all those souls who are more beloved by Him, and called to rise higher than others. Saturday seems to me the day which is more suitable than any other to pray for such as these; for whoever loved more, or was more beloved than the Blessed Virgin? Whoever felt more than she did the sorrows of Jesus?

My soul is strengthened and purified at holy Mass. At the Psalm *Judica me*, and at the *Confiteor*, the soul abases herself before God, and asks pardon. At the *Introit*, she enters into a place which is neither Heaven nor earth. She is with Jesus, between the two—to plead and intercede in favour of poor souls. I

cannot express what I feel at the mere word *Introit* (Entrance). I feel then no longer on, or of, the earth. I am in another world, of another world. We are two—Jesus and myself. United with Him, I continue my Mass. It is always a joy to me to invoke the Three Divine Persons at *Kyrie Eleison*, and to repeat the Angel's song, *Gloria in Excelsis*. . . . When we all stand for the Gospel, I always renew my act of protestation of fidelity to God. I am standing up on His behalf. *Credo* (I believe); that one word alone would suffice to make me remain a long while with God my Father; but the Offertory now begins, and I am anxious to follow all the ceremonies. Above all, I would not miss the oblation of the chalice. I then ask of Jesus to place my soul, and all those whom I am recommending to Him at the holy Sacrifice, upon the paten, and in the chalice, so that this dear Saviour may deign to offer us all to His Father.

The matter of the Sacrifice is prepared. I must offer myself also to be wholly immolated. But, am I ready? After a very brief examen, I make the offering. Very often our Lord

speaks to me during holy Mass, before or after the Elevation, before or after the Communion.

I recite the *Pater* in union with the priest, for every soul that has been, or yet will be, capable of profiting by it; for all souls who now exist; for all those who will exist in the future. This prayer so well sums up all we wish to ask. How I love, too, to say the words, “*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi.*” . . . and to pray Jesus to give me holy absolution before Communion. Of the latter union I will say nothing. I have spoken of it to you often, and I will do so again when there is anything new to tell you.

The moment of the priest’s blessing is a very solemn one for me. Then at length the great Sacrifice is completed, and I say with the priest, “*Et verbum caro factum est.*” Here, again, I would willingly remain, meditating upon this great mystery. Very often, during Mass, or at other times, the thought of the Word seizes upon me in a surprising manner.

I do not say, my Father, that I do all this which I have just described without distraction. Oh no! I often remind myself of a lesson which our Lord once gave me. I was

then at the workroom. One day I went into chapel with my mind all full of distractions. Our Lord sharply rebuked me; and after making my sign of the cross on entering, I was, so to speak, forced to go back to the door, and Jesus said to me: "Leave your baggage at the door." I understood the lesson; my distractions were the baggage our Lord spoke of. I was greatly struck by this lesson. Alas! I am so often burdened with this miserable baggage.

CHAPTER XIII

HOLY COMMUNION

I ASPIRE henceforth to nothing but Divine Love. When I awake, while preparing myself for holy Mass and Communion, I say to our Lord : “ I am coming to gain more love.” As I go to the chapel, I think how I am going to the fire—not to extinguish it, but, on the contrary, to replenish it.

I had said to our Lord : “ Either let me die, or communicate every day.” Communicate in order to love ; communicate frequently in order to love much ; communicate without feeling any emotion, but still only let me communicate ! Our Lord realized my desire. He even went beyond my hopes. I could not have imagined that my union with Him and with the Father could become so intimate.

When, before Holy Communion, I say, “ Lord, I am not worthy,” I quickly add,

“ It is true, my Jesus, I am utterly unworthy, but I so desire to receive Thee.” After having deeply abased myself, and earnestly asked for pardon, I think only of the joy of uniting myself to Him Who is all my delight.

The more one drinks in great heat, the greater becomes one's thirst. Last evening I counted up the hours—eleven more to wait. What a long time—eleven hours ! During the night, I still counted them. When I arrived in the chapel, my heart was beating with joy . . . Jesus was waiting for me. . . . In the Tabernacle there was a Host in which our Lord had enclosed Himself for me. He had thought of me when He did so. Holy Mass is not too long a time in which to glorify God and purify myself from my faults ; but it seems long to me, because I am longing to receive Jesus. When the priest opened the Tabernacle before Communion, although my own desire for the God of the Eucharist was so ardent, so violent, yet He, this great God, said to me : “ My desire is even greater than yours.” This was enough. Jesus had no need to tell me at greater length. We desired each other. We sighed for each other.

On October 22, 1907, some moments before Communion, Jesus approached me, and drew me gently to Himself. He threw a veil, as it were, over His little sister, so that she should see Him alone, should concern herself with Him only. When she was thus covered, He kept close to her, accompanied her to the Holy Table, and then gave Himself as her Food to this privileged child of His Heart.

This morning, the veil was again thrown over me. My soul was joined to the Soul of Jesus. I sighed for the Divine Guest. I called Him by all the sweetest and tenderest names. When I said, "O come, Jesus, my love," He replied, "Child, if you only knew how much I love you! Never, no, never, can you fully respond to My love for you." I went to the chapel, penetrated through and through with these words, and wholly desirous of responding to the love of Jesus, as far as was possible. But Jesus did not stop there. During Holy Mass, and after Holy Communion, He continued His favours towards me.

Another time, directly I awoke, I called Him with ardent desire: "Come, O my Jesus; come, Life of my soul, make haste to

descend towards me, to reach me." The time before Communion seems very long to me. During Mass I pray with Jesus, I adore with Jesus, I give thanks with Jesus, I ask mercy of Jesus, I speak with Jesus, I invite Him to come into my heart, I urge Him to come to me. The moment for Communion draws near, and I am at the Holy Table. "Purify me yet more, O my beloved Jesus, and come!" Then—Jesus is resting on my tongue; and what joy it is to possess Him Whom the Angels adore, Who makes the Saints—to possess Sanctity Itself.

"We are one, O dearest Saviour; abide in me, for I desire to abide in Thee." It is as if I were alone upon the earth with our Lord. My senses are closed to all exterior things. I possess my Treasure. I will keep it, and, while keeping it, will yet give it to other souls. "All the riches of My Heart are at your disposal," Jesus has said to me.

June 28, 1907.—In Holy Communion to-day, Jesus showed Himself to me under the form of a little Child peacefully asleep in my soul. I understood by this that our Lord was calling me to a life of more perfect silence and

recollection. The slightest noise would hinder my soul from hearing God. After Communion, our Lord promised to grant me all I should ask Him to-day.

June 30, 1907.—By Holy Communion Jesus has entered my soul as a conquering King. He was clothed in a superb mantle of red velvet, and crowned with a most beautiful gold diadem. As I write these lines, our Lord gives me the meaning of this triumph. Certain souls whom He loved have given themselves up to His grace and love, and His Heart rejoices at it with His poor little spouse. The Divine Master has sometimes told me this : “ Our joys and our sorrows are common to us both.”

One morning, as I awoke, the breath of God passed over my soul, and I heard our Lord say to me : “ Your life must be wholly filled with God.” How is it that it is not more filled with God—this life of mine which is nourished by Jesus Christ Himself ? His Heart beats continually upon my poor heart. His Blood ceaselessly flows in my veins. His Soul is always close joined to mine ; and yet I remain altogether carnal. What a strange

mystery it is ! Holy Communion is the morning kiss of Jesus to His child. The purer the soul, the deeper this kiss is impressed upon her. The greater the ardour with which she goes to Jesus, desiring to possess Him, to give Him to others, and to love Him more, the more tender and loving is His kiss. It is impressed upon the soul, like the seal upon soft wax. (It is Jesus Himself Who tells me all this.) “And when, O Jesus, the soul goes to Thee in order to console Thee ?” . . . Jesus replies : “When anyone comes to Me to console Me, then our two souls melt into one ; for by this Divine kiss they pass one into the other.”

Who would not hunger for the Divine Eucharist ? for Jesus, the Life of our souls ? “Not only do I hunger, Jesus, but I thirst. I am parched, and only Thou canst quench my thirst. Open to me every morning the source of living waters. And every morning is not enough. Grant rather that this source may never cease to flow for me ; that at every hour of the day and night, and oftener yet, at every moment, I may be able to quench my thirst while also renewing it ; for the more I drink, the more thirsty I am. O my Jesus, I thirst !

give me to drink ; refresh my burning mouth, and even more than that, my heart and my soul ; for all my powers call for Thee, demand Thee. I will not leave Thee until Thou hast given me to drink. One day, seated by Jacob's Well, and exhausted with fatigue, Thou, the King of Heaven and earth, didst wait for a poor sinful woman, and didst ask her to give Thee to drink. For what didst Thou thirst, O Jesus ? for a little water ? No ; Thou couldst, by Thy power, have made a spring of living water burst forth to quench Thy thirst, but it was this soul whom Thou didst thirst for, and didst await at the well. And every morning I, the privileged child of Jesus, the spouse of Christ, am awaited by Thee, the King of Heaven and earth."

Directly morning comes, Jesus is athirst for my soul ; and I, too, thirst for His power, His love, His glory. He thirsts for my sanctification. We thus thirst the one for the other. I can quench my thirst by coming to Jesus and uniting myself to Him ; but can He do the same by giving Himself to me ? Is His thirst quenched every day by me ? Does He not find the vessel full of impurities which

prevent it? “O Jesus; purify the vessel of my soul, purify it more and more, and grant that my ever-increasing ardour may respond to Thine.” In the evening (as in the morning), it seems to me that Jesus again gives a kiss to His child, saying to her, “Till to-morrow morning, child.” And she goes to sleep under the influence of this Divine kiss. The night is very, very long, and she wakes more than once, saying to Jesus, “I am thirsty.” “Wait a little longer,” our Lord replies; and the child waits. She can do nothing else. But her thirst increases, and now sleep does not come again to close her eyelids, because she desires too much to be fed and refreshed. She complains again to her God. “I am thirsty; I can wait no longer. When will the happy moment of Holy Communion come? The hours seem so long, Jesus, when one is waiting for Thee.”

At last the time comes for her to go to her Jesus, her Friend—to go, that is, to her own home. “Ah! Jesus, Thou art waiting for me, and I am sighing for Thee. All the night Thou hast kept watch for me, hast remained solitary for my sake. Now I come to keep Thee company, to console Thee, to unite myself to

Thee, to love Thee better. I do love Thee, Jesus, my Love, but I desire to love Thee far more." Jesus answers: "I too love you, child." And who can say with what love Jesus loves me? Who can understand it? No one; not even the soul who feels herself so beloved.

Jesus loves the soul, but He demands love in return. Every morning at Holy Mass, when I offer myself to Him, I hear a voice saying, "To be wholly immolated." This morning, after Communion, I was renewing the offering, and Jesus said: "To be wholly immolated, consumed, destroyed by the fire of Divine love." Since the desires of Jesus tend to this end, mine must tend there also.

CHAPTER XIV

VISITS TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

WHILE I was at the workroom chapel during the hour of the instruction at Saint Charles' (the Mother-House), how I envied the happiness of our Sisters there. Our Lord allowed me to languish for a little while: during several hours the Divine Master seemed to wish to say nothing to me. I spoke to Him; but our sweet Jesus made no reply. In spite of His silence, I still felt I longed to be near our dear Saviour. I had left the chapel in the morning, but soon I felt I must return. I could not remain any longer away from the Tabernacle. I prayed Jesus to make Himself once more heard by my soul. And this is what He said: "My daughter, you must show Me many little attentions." My reply was this: "My God, make me love Thee passionately, and then I will give Thee all Thou desirest of me."

One day, after the midday meal, while giving thanks to God for the bodily nourishment which I had taken, I said to Him before His Tabernacle; "My God, give me Thyself." The Divine Master deigned to answer: "I have already given Myself to you." "But give Thyself yet more, O Lord, I beseech Thee." Could Jesus resist this prayer from a heart which loves Him and so ardently desires Him?

March 21, 1907.—At the moment of quitting the chapel this morning I said to our Lord: "I leave Thy dwelling-place, but not Thee, my Jesus, since Thou dost deign to dwell always in my heart. Come with me, my Jesus, for I cannot live without Thee." "I am following you, My daughter." Hearing these words of Jesus, I moved the prie-dieu chair to go out. As I did so I saw our Lord leaving the place next me. I allowed Him to pass in front of me, bowing low to Him. We both left the chapel, but the good Master hid Himself so well that I neither saw nor felt Him all that day.

Oh! how good it is to go to the chapel after being deprived for a week. How good to

find oneself near to Jesus, to contemplate His humble dwelling. Humble, indeed, it is, this dwelling towards which we turn our gaze ; but He Who inhabits it is so great !

The air which I breathe near the Tabernacle is not the same as elsewhere, for it is already that of Paradise. I know this by experience. I should wish never to leave Jesus. I said again to Him : “ Let me die, or communicate every day, or else let me suffer a great deal.”

CHAPTER XV

UNION WITH JESUS IN EVERY ACTION OF THE DAY—LIFE OF FAMILIARITY WITH JESUS

THIS is how I practise that life of familiarity, which seems to me one full of tenderness and love for Jesus.

When I take holy water on waking, or on going to rest, on going into chapel, or on leaving my room (which I always do), I offer it to Jesus, and together we make the sign of the cross. When I open a door I wait for a moment, as if to allow someone to pass before me—this is Jesus. If I go up or downstairs, I give way to an invisible Being Who accompanies me—to Jesus. If I take a chair to sit down, I offer it first to the dear Companion of my life; to my most sweet Jesus. If I kneel down to pray I make room by my side for Jesus, Who always begins the prayer. At the sacred tribunal of Penance, Jesus enters

first. He blesses me, He listens to me, He pardons me, He adorns my soul which desires to remain united to His all-beautiful Soul, so radiant in holiness. At the Holy Table, Jesus seats Himself first, then gives Himself to my famished soul, which never ceases to long after Him. And when He is reposing there, He accomplishes His work in her. If I begin to work or to write, I offer my pencil or my pen to Jesus. He begins to trace the pattern, or to form the first letter, as a teacher forms it on the copy-book of her pupil. I am the pupil of Jesus. When I have any business to do, or any errand, we do it together—Jesus and I. In the morning, when I make my bed, I say to Him: “My sweet Jesus, I do this in obedience to Thee.” At night I tell Him that I am going to take my rest in imitation of that which He took when fatigued by His search after souls. I take my meals with Jesus. He always begins them. I offer Him everything which is served to me. Is there perhaps in all this too great familiarity with the great King of Heaven and earth? And yet I never forget the profound respect which I owe to my God. I begin my recreations

with Jesus. I continue and end them with Him, and all this without anything being perceived outwardly. Nothing prevents me conversing with Jesus while I am occupied with creatures. The speech of the soul suffices. God hears us, and even less than that is enough, the glance of the soul says everything. My first word at recreation is a wish addressed to the Divine Master, such as this: "My Jesus, mayest Thou be loved during this recreation! May this little relaxation uplift our souls to Thee. My Jesus, let us not offend Thee! My Jesus, may we think and speak of Thee!"

CHAPTER XVI

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

I LIVE in familiar union with the Most Holy Trinity. I never think of Jesus without thinking also of the Father and the Holy Spirit. I never pray to Jesus without also praying to the other Two Divine Persons. It is Jesus, my elder Brother, Who initiates me into this familiar union.

December 18, 1906.—For many days past, every evening at the same hour, I enjoy the sensible presence of the Three Divine Persons. I do not see Them as I see other persons, and yet, nevertheless, I am certain of Their Presence—as certain as it is possible to be in such a case. Their approach and manifestation are announced by the most profound state of recollection. It would seem that the senses die away, and that the whole interior is in darkness.

January 20, 1907.—It seems as if the good God had an immense need of giving me marks of His Infinite tenderness.

During the spiritual reading I was overtaken by a sort of sleep, which yet was not really sleep. The eyes of the body seemed to be closed to the natural light, while those of the soul were opened to that which is supernatural. It seemed as if the natural life ceased, in proportion as the supernatural and Divine life flowed more abundantly into the soul. I found myself in a place, or rather in a state, of delight, for it was more the latter than the former. I was enjoying the Presence of the Infinite Being in the darkness, although in a sensible and spiritual fashion. I was then in God, rather than God in me, as is ordinarily the case. While this intense union with God lasted, I saw a limitless horizon unfolding itself before me. This was, I believe, an image of the Divine immensity. I heard the reading which was going on, but I could not apply my spirit to what I heard. I was in a sort of lethargy. At the moment when the Divine union began I asked myself whether I ought to allow myself to be taken possession

of by God, or to make every effort to resist. I struggled at first, and even during all the time of the union, but probably not sufficiently hard. I will agree exactly with whatever you are pleased to tell me about it. I had made a long meditation upon the Adorable Trinity. This had doubtless prepared my soul for the union, which had been already preceded by two visits, shorter and less sensible than this one, from the Divine Persons.

At the moment when I was going by the sign of the cross,* to mark with the seal of the Most Holy Trinity the greatest action of the day, Holy Mass, the Three Divine Persons stooped down towards me, and I felt Their Presence during several minutes. This greatly helped me to hear Mass with recollection and fervour. During the morning I was in the infirmary tribune, when I again felt, for the second time, Their Adorable Presence. They seemed now nearer to me. Then it was that I began the meditation I have mentioned upon this great and fathomless mystery. I so love to meditate upon this Unity of Essence, which makes of the Three Divine Persons One

* She made the sign of the cross so religiously.

God only. I love to think of their “circum-incession”—that is, the perfect circulation of the Divine Life of Each Person in the Others. I so love to consider that infinite love which unites Them ; to listen to the colloquies which delight Them. How sweet it will be to hear them in Paradise ! Oh, how happy I was to hear the Adorable Trinity spoken of ! It is so sweet to hear of what one loves ; and how could a religious not love listening to words about this great mystery ? If it is sweet to hear the Three Divine Persons spoken of, it is far sweeter to live with Each of Them. What beloved company ! Is there any happiness to compare with that of a soul united with the Divine Persons, living in the thought—more than that—in the habitual society of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ? And this happiness can always be ours.

The catechism touched and gladdened me all the more, charmed me all the more, because since yesterday I see the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and feel Their Presence in me—the Three move in me. I partake in a slight degree of Their joy and Their happiness. I feel something of that mutual love which

unites Them—which of Three Persons makes but One God. O Father, I adore and love Thee. O well-beloved Son of the Father, I adore and love Thee. O Holy Spirit, I adore and love Thee. And I ask, O Adorable Trinity, to live even here below by Thy life.

It seems to me—and our Lord has told me so several times—that I am called to have special relations with the Most Holy Trinity. I am quite unworthy of it, but from the profoundest depths of my misery I accept, with humility and gratitude, all that God does, or will do, in me by His very great mercy. I love Each of the Three Divine Persons with a particular love, and I believe that They also love me tenderly.

To-day I have lived in a special manner in the thought—the intimate and frequent remembrance of the Holy Trinity. In each of my actions I have sought to please the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

On April 19, 1907, having, in Holy Communion, asked of the Father to give me His Son, and the Father and the Son to give me the Holy Spirit, I invited and implored the Father to come into my soul. I said :

“Come, Beloved Father, come, and dwell in me.” And I heard a Voice say: “How closely united we shall live.” Is it possible that one day I shall live in closest intimacy with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Yes; it is possible, and God wills it; and the good God waits for me to be ready, that He may consummate this union. I was praying for a dying woman, and was forced to interrupt my prayer. I remained there, tranquil, lost in the thought of God. The Three Divine Persons showed Themselves to me at the edge of a vast limpid ocean, in which They were mirrored, so to speak, as a human person is reflected in a stream. In this superb ocean, the happiness, the joy, the infinite jubilation of the Adorable Trinity were all reflected. This ocean is nothing else than the image, though a most imperfect one, of the Divinity; ocean of love, of wisdom, of sanctity, of mercy; abyss of the infinite perfections which we shall contemplate and adore through all eternity.

“Oh, unfathomable mystery of the Holy Trinity, I adore Thee! O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I love You; and I rejoice at the

thought of seeing and contemplating You, no longer under figures and deep shadows, but in reality. I rejoice when I think of contemplating and possessing You in the splendours of eternity."

"O God, how shall I reveal the things which I see and feel but do not at all understand? My poor soul is all in mystery. What hast Thou wrought in it since the beginning of my existence? What dost Thou work in it during these past years and months; and above all in these last few days? All is mystery, and for three days now still more profound mystery. The Infinite seems to forget what He is and what I am. He forgets His greatness and dignity, in order to stoop to my nothingness. O God, what art Thou doing? Thou dost unite two contraries; for, if I seek what Thou art, and what I am, I reply: Thou art the Eternal, and I am a poor creature, a mere nothing, which passes away. Thou, my God, art Infinite Sanctity, and I am only imperfection and sin. Thou art Infinite Power, and I am weakness itself. Thou art Uncreated Light, and I am but darkness. . . . This is what Thou art, and what I am. How, after seeing all

this, can I say what Thou doest. How can I express Thy Presence and Thine action in me?" There is no true language in which to speak here below of Divine things. Moral, as well as physical, inability has prevented me from writing about them. Another reason is, that I wished to see whether the union would continue. I desired, so to speak, to let these Divine things ripen in my soul before making them known.

For three days now, the union with the Holy Trinity is so intense, so continual, that it appears to have become my habitual life. I enjoy always, or nearly always, the Presence of the Three Divine Persons. I feel and see things which I cannot believe are for me, and yet, nevertheless, I give and abandon myself wholly to the Divine action, and allow God to work in me.

For some months past our Lord has been announcing to me this ineffable union with the Adorable Trinity, but I was ignorant of the moment chosen by the Divine Wisdom. I knew that this incomparable grace would come to me through Mary; and I have always invoked her in a special manner, to ask her to

prepare me herself for this great favour. It was on Friday, May 31, that I received it—the last day of the month of the Blessed Virgin, a Friday, and the eve of the month of the Sacred Heart. Truly a well-chosen, a blessed day!

I assisted at Mass as usual. A short while before Communion I was forewarned that this was to be the day of union. I at once felt regret that I had not known sooner, so that I might have been better prepared; but I counted upon the goodness and infinite mercy of my God. I abased myself profoundly, and immediately entered into a state of great recollection, which still continues. When I went from the infirmary tribune to the Holy Table, I felt that Three Divine Persons were accompanying me. I did not see Them, but I felt Their presence as sensibly as if They were really walking by my side.

After Holy Communion, I followed the inspiration which came to me, to make an act of complete abandonment of my whole being to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Our Lord Himself showed me how to make my thanksgiving in this manner. This act of

total abandonment once made, I remained silent. Our Lord interrupted this silent adoration. "Are you ready?" Jesus said to me.

"Lord, do Thou deign to prepare me Thyself. Give me, I pray Thee, whatever is lacking to me."

Of myself, I could not have prepared myself for this union. That is why, instead of replying directly to the question of Jesus, I asked this good Master to prepare me Himself. After these words the Word showed Himself to me in a sensible manner; then the Father, and then the Holy Spirit did the same. The Word said to His Father, speaking of my soul: "This soul is My own dwelling-place, consequently Thine too, My Father. Do Thou enter in and rest there." And God the Father entered my poor abode and took His seat there. The Word renewed the same invitation to the Holy Spirit, Who also took the same attitude of repose in my soul (seating Himself). Neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit have any bodily form, but the Three Divine Persons, in order to manifest Themselves more clearly to me, seemed to have taken to themselves a sensible

form, which is nevertheless impossible to describe.

They thus took possession of Their domain, and, as a sensible sign of the union which took place when They did so, a spring gushed forth in my soul. This spring, symbol of the Divine life which flows in my soul, has never dried up since, nor will it, I believe, until the day comes when I can drink of the torrent of the Divinity Itself.

The Three Divine Persons are present in my soul; not with that habitual presence ordinary to every soul in a state of grace, but by an “altogether special Presence.” So Jesus said to me. They are there, and Their life is poured forth in me. A dazzling radiance has filled my soul. It is God, the Infinite Splendour . . . the Holy Spirit Himself, Who sends forth His rays and illuminates my soul. All this lasted for some moments, and has been renewed several times since. I then heard a voice which repeated three times the same words :

“Humility—that you may glorify the Father, Who has abased Himself to enter you. Humility—that you may glorify the Word,

Who has abased Himself to enter you. Humility—that you may glorify the Holy Spirit, Who has abased Himself to enter you.”

After this threefold repetition, the Word—for I believe it to have been He Who spoke—added these further words, also repeated three times: “Forgetfulness of self, and love.”

My soul is, therefore, the abode of the Adorable Trinity. I see, but above all I feel, the Presence of the Three Divine Persons. I cannot define what I felt at the moment of the union, nor what I feel now, for it still continues. The Adorable Trinity manifest Their Presence to me—sometimes by the same brightness which was produced at the actual moment when the union took place; sometimes by a burning fire which consumes me; sometimes by the perfumes which this Presence sheds around me. It is as if I were in a magnificent garden of roses, which give forth the sweetest odours. When I inhale them, I cannot believe that I am any longer on earth, but think that I must already be in Paradise. I live habitually in the company of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; not, most certainly, as I shall live with Them in Paradise. I do not see Them now as I shall then, for here below everything is wrapped round and covered with darkness, but I think of Them. I see Them in a certain manner; and even when I do not see Them, I feel Their Adorable Presence, and I act with Them and for Them. I also feel other things which I cannot say, a Presence which I cannot reveal. All at once I am seized by the thought of the Divine Being Who dwells in my soul, and of the great things He does in me. The soul remains overwhelmed before such a spectacle. She is not tempted to vanity . . . she has but one thought . . . profound self-abasement. The Infinite so wraps her round that she herself seems to disappear completely. The soul is then powerless to render to God the homage due to Him; or, to speak more truly, she pays Him in silence the homage of her whole being, of her nothingness. What else has she to offer Him? She is nothing; she has nothing; she can do nothing. God alone is all, and can do all.

June 4, 1907.—What can I say about this day, during which the union with the Three Divine Persons increased and was perfected, if I may use the word, during which the good God has been more than ever a Father to me? To describe it, I should be obliged to write down the entire day, for when God fills a soul, He fills all her days and all her life. The union with the Three Divine Persons becomes ever closer. I am more and more penetrated with the consciousness of Them. Their Presence is ever dearer and more sensible to me. I live continually in Their company—at work and at recreation as well as at prayer. They are present with me. I think of Them; and even though I may be talking to a companion, I am speaking interiorly to Them. Early this morning, the Father placed me quite close to Him. The Word and the Holy Spirit are there also; but I am nearest to the Father, between Him and the Word. Just a little daughter by the side of her Father. I kept this place all the day. How I love it! And this picture is sweet to contemplate, the child resting on the bosom of her Heavenly Father. How much better we

- shall rest on the bosom of this Beloved Father in Paradise !

(Who can reveal to you the love of the Heavenly Father for your poor child ? I should not succeed in doing so, however much I tried. The knowledge is reserved for you in Paradise.)

When I reached the chapel for Holy Mass, I knew interiorly that I was about to enter into direct communication with the Angels and Saints, so that I may know them all when I reach Paradise.

After Communion God the Father presented me to all the Heavenly Court. The Angels and Saints asked, "Is she coming to be with us ?" And the answer was, "Soon."

Since I have entered into direct communication with the Angels and Saints, I desire, by my prayers and sufferings, and, above all, by Mass and Holy Communion, to increase their glory, so far as is possible to me. This is very dear to my heart, and to-day I treated of it with Jesus, the King of Angels and Saints. At the end of my prayer I participated by a mysterious communion in the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, the goodness

and charity of the Holy Ghost. You will ask how this was done? Well, for a long time I had desired this Communion. I hungered for it; I very often asked for this grace; and this morning, in my prayer, I asked again. At the end of the holy exercise, three springs burst forth suddenly from the Adorable Trinity, to flow continually in my soul. I say *continually*, for they are still flowing. They have never ceased since this morning. At the moment when they gushed forth, God the Father said to me: "Participate in the power of the Father, that you may conquer your passions, and surmount every obstacle which hinders you from belonging entirely to God. Participate in the wisdom of the Son, so that you may henceforth taste only Divine things. Participate in the goodness and the charity of the Holy Spirit, so as to fill your soul with His Divine ardour, His sacred fire."

I was entirely happy after this communion, and it still continues, since the springs continue to flow. All the day, I cherished my good desire and renewed my petition. Ah! may I never, by my infidelities, dry up these

wonderful sources ! May I, on the contrary, by my generous love, obtain through them an ever-increasing fruitfulness for my own soul, and for those souls who are dear to me. The more I receive, the more I always desire to give to those I love.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FATHER

ON the evening of December 28, 1906, our Lord took me by the hand, and presented me to the Father.

Why is it that I am more favoured by the Presence of the Father than by that of the Holy Spirit? Probably because I have a special devotion to the Eternal Father. I love the Holy Spirit greatly. I invoke Him often during the day. But when I think of the Father I am conscious of the most tender feelings. I feel that I love Him with an altogether special love, and I feel myself loved by Him.

January 9, 1907.—The profound recollection of yesterday had prepared my heart for the advent of Jesus; and also for that of another Divine Person, the Holy Spirit. I so desired His Presence in me. So much

the more that I habitually enjoy that of the Father and the Son, and not feeling that of the Holy Spirit, I feared I might have grieved Him. In all this there is doubtless a fresh proof of kindness on the part of the Eternal Father, to Whom I had told my trouble and anxiety.

After Communion a "ball of fire" rested, and still rests, on my heart, which was then shown to me as an altar on which Jesus celebrates, and in the centre of which is this "ball of fire." The ball seemed to be wrapped up in a sort of covering.

The Holy Spirit appears to have descended into my heart only after the Communion of Wednesday, and yet I think He was there already during the whole of Tuesday. The fire which inflamed my soul with such ardour was, I believe, no other than the Spirit of Love; but He had not yet revealed His Presence under any sensible form.

Although I now know by an interior consciousness that the Holy Spirit is within me, I do not enjoy His Presence in so sensible a manner as I do that of the Father and the Son. I will not now try to paint for you the

beautiful, touching scene of last evening. I can give you an account of the words spoken, but it would be impossible to reveal to you the accent with which they were pronounced, or the kindness and tenderness which the Father and the Son showed me. It was a scene which cannot be described. One must have witnessed it in order to believe in such a familiarity with God, and even the favoured soul herself can hardly do so.

Our Lord said to me: "My little sister, since you possess Jesus and can dispose of Him as you will, all the treasures of Heaven are yours. My Father is ever thinking of you. He constantly concerns Himself about you. He desires to give you pleasure in everything." He often says: "This is for My little daughter on earth, for Our little daughter on earth."

I fell asleep thinking: "I am the little sister of Jesus, the little daughter of this tender Father in Heaven." It is God Himself who calls me by these sweet names, "sister" and "daughter." During the night I awoke, still full of these thoughts.

January 19.—This morning I drew near to the Holy Table, recalling the consoling scene of

the day before. I ardently desired Jesus. How could I not desire to unite myself to Him who deigns to call me His "little sister"?

After Communion, our Lord said: "My little sister, you can ask My Father in My Name all that you wish; you are quite sure to obtain it. My Father can refuse you nothing." I waited a few moments, then, remembering these words of the Father, "I have given you My Son, give Him back to Me in return," I made this offering, and then added, "Tender Father, give me once more this well-beloved Son of Thine, and come to me Thyself." "My little daughter, I am always there where My Son is. Jesus is in your heart. I promise you that He shall always remain there."

I then enjoyed the Presence of the Father and the Son. I felt that They loved me with an immense love, that They had an inexpressible tenderness for me. I continued my prayer: "Tender Father, well-beloved Son, give me your Holy Spirit of Love." God the Father replied with kindness: "Be consoled, little daughter, the Holy Spirit is within you, but the moment has not yet come for Him to manifest His Presence there. This slight con-

sciousness, this dim sight which you have of His Presence, is given, in order to reassure you, because you were afraid you had grieved Him by some unfaithfulness. That is why the "ball of fire" seems to you wrapped in a covering. It is like the fire concealed under the wood-ash. It cannot be seen, but that does not prevent it existing and giving heat—a very gentle heat, it is true, but when anyone uncovers the flame, it rises up. So it will be with you, when it shall please Me to manifest and render sensible the Presence of the Holy Spirit within you."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ALLIANCE WITH THE WORD

November 3, 1907.—After the sermon of this morning, who would not feel his will enkindled, moved, and fortified? who would not desire to attain to holiness?

After Communion, Jesus gave me this lesson: "To adorn my soul carefully many times a day. To see that no jewels are lacking to the ornaments of the spouse of Jesus. To get rid of any little blemish directly it appears."

In the evening Jesus wrote upon His adorable Breast these two desires of His child and spouse—the desire for love and the desire for suffering; in other words, the desire for the end, and for the means.

Jesus said: "My spouse has told Me that she wishes for love and for suffering." He wrote the latter in red letters, the former in letters of gold.

November 4, 1907.—"O Word of God, the Angels have filled the heavens with their songs of joy, to celebrate Thy spiritual alliance, Thy mystical marriage with one of Thy loved ones of earth." I heard the heavenly songs of these blessed spirits on the evening of this memorable day. They alone—the true, the happy, the sole witnesses of the great feast of to-day—they alone could describe it and reveal its secrets. The heroine of the feast can only stammer about these things, which cannot be named here below. She is, moreover, plunged in a sort of annihilation, of spiritual drowsiness, from which she cannot escape. She makes an effort to do so, but finds it impossible. "Why, O Eternal Word, didst Thou not charge the Angel Gabriel, who is the Angel of this alliance, with this Divine and supernatural task?" Jesus has all sorts of—I will not say *artifices*, to express the Divine civilities—but skilful resources. Two days ago He willed that I should remain longer at the foot of His Tabernacle. His child was praying, endeavouring to gain souls to Jesus. From time to time she spoke to Him of her love for Him; at other times she said nothing

at all. And Jesus was contemplating His spouse, preparing a great grace for her, rejoicing at this favour. God the Father was regarding with complacency His beloved child, the future spouse of the Word. The Holy Spirit was accomplishing His work of sanctification in this chosen soul. The Adorable Trinity, perhaps the whole of the Heavenly Court, were occupied with to-morrow's feast. This privileged soul alone was ignorant of the great act of love with which God was going to favour her. The day before, after Communion, she had learnt the lesson of how to "adorn her soul." She had guessed nothing of what was coming, only she had laboured to add more jewels to her ornaments by acts of virtue. She had been careful not to allow any blemishes or stains in her soul, and, fearing that she might have offended God when temptation came—for it did come—she sought to purify herself, and had begged of her Divine Spouse to absolve her.

During the night of May 3, Jesus did not wish His spouse to sleep; He wished her to think of Him. This was only justice. He was watching by her—or, rather, in her, since

He continually dwells in her—and His beloved must keep Him company. This she did, and, what is quite extraordinary, the Devil did not come to her during her prayer that night. It was because Jesus had not given him permission. He wished that His spouse should keep awake to think of Him, to contemplate Him with delight. His spouse, although accustomed to the favours of Jesus, even to His caresses and sweet familiarity with her, was astounded at what she remarked in Him. He, the good Master, the tender Spouse, appeared to her to be filled with a still greater goodness and tenderness than usual. He, who was always so ready to communicate Himself to the soul, seemed disposed for a far more intimate familiarity. He contemplated His spouse with happiness. He seemed to take delight in her; and He could well do so, for it was He Himself Who had given her her beauty, Who had thus adorned her. God the Father was regarding His privileged child, and He also seemed to love her even more than usual, although He already had such a tenderness for her. She had said more than once, “I feel myself specially loved by the Father.” And

I do feel that I am specially loved by Him. The Blessed Virgin, on this eve of the feast, this night preceding it, showed herself more than ever a Mother to this privileged soul. Why was all this so? The soul does not know. She gazes at the face of her Spouse, who seems to be adding to her adornment, which, in truth, He really does. The soul contemplates her dear Father, her tender Mother Mary. She suspects that a great day is being prepared for her, but she does not yet know all the Divine plan. She depends entirely on Jesus, and tranquilly awaits His good time. Thus the great day of the alliance began, and Jesus prepared His spouse by word and act. "Let us hasten, My spouse. Time is short. Prepare yourself for the eternal nuptials." These were the first words of Jesus. The eternal nuptials! The soul thought they meant union with God in heaven. They certainly do mean that, but, by a special privilege, the union sometimes begins here below. That is what Jesus wished to tell His spouse. This is the union for which He had prepared her—the union which He had announced more than once by these words, "alliance with the

Word." The soul did not know the time fixed for the alliance, or the manner in which it would take place. She did not know who was the Angel of the alliance. She had thought that perhaps it would be Saint Raphael, the Angel of holy marriages, but it was not. She knows now whom God had chosen for this great ceremony. It was to be Saint Gabriel, the Blessed Virgin's Angel Guardian, the Angel of the Incarnation. Jesus continued to speak to His spouse: "I desire that you should be altogether beautiful, My beloved." After having enriched her with His infinite merits, He does so still further with those of the Blessed Virgin and all the Saints. In what measure she knows not. She only knows that she is clothed and adorned with them. The spouse has guessed nothing. She does not concern herself about it. Jesus does all. While He thus adorns her and contemplates her, another has his eyes upon the soul privileged by Jesus. Why do I say *another*? Many others have their eyes upon her, for he is not alone. He has an army with him. While Jesus is rejoicing and adorning His spouse, Satan is raging, for he cannot bear

such an honour being done to this soul. At a given moment the struggle is fiercer. The enemy is about to fall upon his prey with all his satellites ; but Jesus is there with His good Angels at the moment when the Devil, under the form of a chief at the head of his army, and his demons as soldiers with black, fire-burnt faces, are going to throw themselves with fury upon the chosen soul, Jesus, surrounded by His Angels, draws near and says : “ I shall take care of My spouse ; she is My own.” Satan recoils with terror before the Lord of Heaven and earth. He rages more fiercely because he is vanquished. He disappears from the interior vision of the soul, but does not leave her for all that. But the contest which he continues is no longer waged in the same way. He now torments the soul very fiercely in the ordinary way. The great moment was drawing near, and, in proportion as it did so, the recollection became more profound, the need of being alone with God and of praying became more intense. The solemn hour was soon to sound. The soul finds herself, as it were, surrounded and enwrapped by God, who hides her from all

exterior things. When the clothing ceremony began,* the future spouse of the Word had no desire to know what was going on. She took her seat in a corner, and closed her bodily eyes in order to see better with those of the soul. Everything seemed made to prepare her for the great favour to come—the hymn used at great ceremonies, the *Veni Creator*, which rejoiced and enkindled her heart, the Litany of the Saints, during which she entered into relation with each Saint, and finally, the august Sacrifice of the Altar. Before Mass, Jesus invited His spouse to purify herself by means of this great Sacrifice, and then it was that she knew of the alliance which she was about to contract with the Word. It is not necessary to say what were her dispositions and her fervour during this Mass. She was no longer her own; she belonged to Jesus.

The Elevation had just been rung. This was the great moment; but the spouse was still in ignorance. She said these words: “Eternal Father, I offer Thee Thy Divine Son.” “And I,” said our Lord, “present to Thee, My Father, My beloved spouse.” She then ap-

* There was a clothing that day at Saint Charles’.



CHAPEL OF THE MOTHER HOUSE, COMMUNITY OF SAINT CHARLES,
ANGERS.

To face page 156.

peared clothed in a white robe, and a blue mantle, covered with diamonds and jewels of all kinds. These garments were the merits of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints ; with which she was enriched by her Divine Spouse. The Adorable Trinity contemplated her with love and tenderness. She felt that God the Father was now more truly her Father, God the Son more truly her Spouse, God the Holy Ghost more really her Friend. The Word said to her : “ As a pledge of our union, I give you My Heart* and My Cross. My Heart represents the union of your soul with the Divine Nature, the Eternal Word. My Cross represents your union with the human nature of the Incarnate Word. All My goods are yours. My Person is yours. We are henceforth but one. We have only one will, we are proprietors of each other. We have only one heart wherewith to love the heavenly Father and the Holy Spirit ; to love Mary, all the Angels in general and each in particular ; all the souls in Purgatory, all the souls now on earth, or yet to be born

* On a former occasion, Jesus had *lent* His heart to His betrothed ; now to-day He *gives* it to His spouse.

there. We will give life to souls." The Divine Spouse added, as if to forewarn me: "Nothing should henceforth astonish you."

There were witnesses and assistants at this great ceremony. The Blessed Virgin was there. Could my dearest Mother have been absent? As a submissive Son Jesus had asked the consent of His Mother to contract this alliance; and the Blessed Virgin, happy in this union desired by her Son, wished to show her satisfaction to me, her child, and assure me of her very warm and special affection. The first witness was the Angel Gabriel. Then there were the two Angel Guardians of the spouse. The assistants were Saint Gertrude and Saint Anne, her patrons; Blessed Margaret Mary, "her sister in suffering and love," and Saint Charles, patron of the Community. At his right hand was Mother Saint Louis Gonzaga; at his left, Mother Saint Hippolytus. All were rejoicing at my happiness, at the honour Jesus did me. All the Angels and Saints were celebrating these mystic nuptials, for the spouse heard them singing the joyful thanksgiving.

This privileged soul has become the spouse

of the Word. She has entered, if I may dare to say so, into the great Family of God, the Adorable Trinity. For several days past she had been hearing words which she had not understood: "Come, enter in and dwell with Us." She had no dowry to offer when she entered, and she said to God the Father: "My God, I have no dowry to offer Thee. I am poor and needy, but my Spouse is very rich. I take from His treasures, from His incalculable fortune, what is lacking to my poverty and need."

If all had been carefully prepared beforehand for the great ceremony, everything was also done to conclude it fittingly. With what transports of gratitude and love the spouse of the Word sang the *Te Deum*! and with what happiness did she receive the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament! And the hymn, "Thy heart is no longer thine own," was, surely without knowing it, chosen for her. During the second table, when the privileged soul returned to the chapel, she found everything in silence. The building was almost deserted, the lights were out, the ceremony had come to an end; but her own feast still continued; and in grate-

ful accents this soul, privileged by the Word, loved by the Father, the friend of the Holy Ghost, intoned the *Magnificat*—that hymn of thanksgiving of her Mother. Like her, and with far greater reason, the soul abased herself before God—deeply humbled, and lost in adoration, prayer, and union.

In the afternoon, as she was praying for the Church, Jesus said to His spouse: “Now you have rights which you did not possess before.” Are not these very consoling words? Oh, how she will use those rights to ask and to obtain what she desires for all those whom she loves . . . for the whole Church!

“O Word of God, Word Eternal, Word Incarnate, it was so sweet in the past to Thy little spouse to pronounce Thy Name . . . how much sweeter it will be now to her to hear It pronounced by others!”

All feasts have a morrow. On the 5th of November, the Word willed to add something more to the adornment of His spouse. To complete it, He placed round her neck a superb necklace. The soul asked her Spouse the meaning of it, not understanding. He needed pressing at first, not replying at once,

and allowing her to ask the same question several times. The good Master sometimes does this.

After having kept her waiting, Jesus said : "This necklace is the symbol of faithfulness."

"O Jesus, look well after Thy spouse, and do not trust her too much. Thou knowest well that Thou art too trustful, my Jesus."

In the afternoon, my Spouse said something very consoling : "Whatever you ask of Me, I will grant it. I will infallibly hear your prayer, provided that what you ask be for My glory."

When I presented myself for Holy Communion, I said to our Lord : "Give me at least the crumbs from Thy Holy Table." I so love this prayer of the woman of Canaan. Jesus, always so tender, said : "I will give you, not the crumbs, but the very best from My Table, from My Heart." Do you think that these words make the soul vain? Oh no; on the contrary, they fill her with humility. I wish to make use of the Divine favours to raise myself up to God, and at the same time to abase myself to the depths of my own nothingness. The Angels keep a record of the favours which I receive; and I do the

same, in order to humiliate myself more, because of them.

Every time that I am athirst for Jesus, for my God, a mysterious beverage is at my disposal. "Take and drink," says Jesus. What does it signify? I do not know. Is it a participation in the Godhead? I believe it to be so; but our Lord has not said so. For some time past this beverage has been offered to me by Jesus Himself.

CHAPTER XIX

THE ALLIANCE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

How good our Lord is ! He rejoices with me and for me, because of the coming of the Holy Spirit into my soul. While I was making my visit to Him, He said joyously to me : “The Holy Spirit will complete the work of your sanctification.” Everything in this beloved Jesus, this Adorable Word, revealed His joy and happiness. He seemed to say : “My spouse, I have begun in you, and done for you what I did in My Apostles : I have chosen you, called you, taught you ; have given Myself to you ; now I am going to send you the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who will teach you all things, will change you entirely, as He changed the Apostles. . . .”

“O Holy Spirit, come and transform me wholly into Jesus, for the honour of my Divine Spouse.”

I said that everything in Jesus—His air of contentment, His joyous tone, His attitude, His manner—all revealed the happiness He felt in sending the Holy Spirit to His spouse. Why should Jesus be so pleased? Doubtless because He loves her, oh, far more than she deserves, but also surely because He loves the Holy Spirit! We are beloved by the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit; but with what love He is beloved by the two other Divine Persons!

This morning, when kneeling at the Holy Table, I did not think our Lord came to me quickly enough; and, growing impatient, I said: "Ah! my Jesus, come quickly. I am thinking only of Thee." "And of the Divine Friend," Jesus corrected. See! Jesus, the Word, will not be loved alone. He does not wish us to think only of Him, He wishes us to think also of His Father and His Holy Spirit. And, indeed, no one can truly love the Son without also loving the Father and the Holy Spirit; just as no one can truly love the Father apart from the other two Divine Persons. The Holy Spirit is the Breath of love of Father and Son.

November 21, 1907.—"O my God! Where am I? I know not. And yet I do know. I am with Thee and in Thee, O my God, so deeply lost in Thee that I cry out. I no longer know where I am; wishing to show to what point I am beside myself. Thou hast made me penetrate into this region already known to me, and now I dwell there altogether. This region is Thyself; and I lose myself deep therein. Thou dost wrap me round on all sides, and dost make self completely disappear. Oh, happy union of the soul with her God."

"What am I doing here in this region with the Infinite? Absolutely nothing! I am in such a state of dryness that it is astounding, and would be most distressing, if I did not consider that this is more glorifying to God and more profitable for myself."

"But what art Thou doing, my God? Great things according to Thy promise. '*To-morrow, the Lord will show in thee great things.*'"

"But it is Thou alone Who doest them. My soul is inert. Thou dost contract the holiest, the most noble of alliances, with the vilest and most miserable of creatures. Thou givest her Thy most excellent gift—the Holy Spirit.

Thou dost make her Thy spouse. Is it indeed true, my God, that Thou dost grant me such a favour on this feast of my Mother Mary? This was not the favour I had thought Thou didst promise for to-day. I was far from suspecting what Thou dost give me . . . and yet . . . it seems real to me. O my God; what doest Thou? This is the cry which escapes from my heart, humbled, grateful, and filled with confusion. To whom dost Thou address Thyself? Dost Thou know to whom it is that Thou givest such graces? Yes, Thou knowest well, and yet Thou dost continue them; nothing prevents Thee. O my God, the nearer Thou dost draw me to Thee the deeper I plunge myself in my own nothingness. O my God, Who art Thou, and who am I."

Our Lord had promised me great things for to-day, and yet nothing announced the realization of the promise. I was in a state of extreme spiritual dryness and desolation. I was praying with no fervour. I might almost say I was feeling a disgust for prayer, which yet was not a real disgust.

In prayer dryness; at Holy Mass dryness and desolation still; and yet, notwithstanding,

a supernatural force which uplifted the soul without giving joy. At Holy Communion, the same thing. I understood nothing of this conduct on the part of the good God. I should have been inclined to believe that He had made me no promise at all if I had not felt interiorly the certainty that He had. And before Mass again our Lord had renewed it in these words: "The Holy Spirit will fill up all that is lacking in your life." He is coming then, this Holy Spirit.

At the same instant I knew that Jesus was purifying my soul from all stains, so that there might be nothing left in me which could displease the Divine Friend. Another consciousness was given me at the same time. There are certain signs by which it can be recognized that I have received the Holy Spirit. I believe that our Lord gave me two of these signs—firstly, the rapid progress which I shall make towards perfection; secondly, the understanding of Divine things.

I objected: "But what of love? Shall I not love more keenly, more ardently, more intensely?" Our Lord replied: "It is love which will be the principle of this perfection.

It is just because you will love more that you will advance more quickly."

Finally, a third consciousness was given me just before Communion—that the moment of thanksgiving would be the moment of union. At the Elevation, and up till the end of Mass, I saw the Holy Dove hovering above my head, but I only saw it dimly. After Communion our Lord let me hear these words: "I have not come alone. You are no longer of this world; you are of God, and belong entirely to Him." And, as I was renewing the offering of my whole being at the hands of the Blessed Virgin, our Lord replied: "In return, I give you My Holy Spirit." I still felt cold and as if made of ice. The precious moment had come, the thanksgiving had begun. Suddenly I found myself in the presence of the Adorable Trinity. I saw, intellectually, the Three Divine Persons. The Word, as my Spouse, presented me to His Father, Who blessed me and said: "Enter in; and dwell with Us and in Us, by the Holy Spirit, Whom I give to you to-day." And the Holy Spirit said: "I receive you as My spouse." I did not hear the priest's blessing

at the end of Mass—generally such a solemn moment for me ; for God the Father was blessing me, and giving me His Holy Spirit.

I had a crown of roses on my head. I asked our Lord what it meant. My Divine Spouse replied : “ It is the sign of your alliance with the Holy Spirit.” I had never thought of such an alliance with this Divine Person. It is the plenitude which was promised to me.

November 22, 1907.—There is in my soul a special Presence of the Holy Spirit, just as there is a special Presence of the Word. I feel the former in the same way as I feel the latter—as clearly, and in quite as assured and certain a manner.

I questioned our Lord : “ My Jesus, what difference is there between to-day’s alliance and that of November 4 ?” And this was, I think, His reply : “ ‘To-day’s alliance is the perfecting of that contracted with the Word.’ ”

I questioned Jesus several times. I said to Him : “ My Jesus, since I question Thee under obedience, I have the right to expect a reply from Thee.”

Jesus always answered in the same words : “ This alliance with the Holy Spirit (an alliance

which is one altogether of love, since it unites you in a special manner to Him Who is the infinite Love of the Father and Son), completes and perfects that which you contracted with the Word. As the Word is one with the Holy Spirit, so He wills that His spouse should also be one with this Divine Spirit."

In order to show me clearly, to make me understand that I truly possess the Holy Spirit, and that our union is a real one, our Lord multiplied, so to speak, His words to me—words which show me the truth of this fact. This morning, when I said, "Give us this day our daily bread," I felt such a hunger for our Lord that this Divine Master could not but respond to my desire. He said: "The Holy Spirit will make Jesus grow in you." This growth of Jesus in the soul surely indicates a more abundant fulness of Jesus in me. He will become yet more my own. And yet He is already mine. He has given me all His goods and His Heart. He has given me His Person. But this possession can be developed and perfected; and it is the Holy Spirit Who will realize this perfection.

I continued my prayer: "My God, I love

Thee with my whole heart !” His reply was : “ How much more you will love Us now that you are united to Love itself !” Each time that I asked something of our Lord, or thanked Him, or did any other action, He always rebuked me, and said : “ You must say by and in the Holy Spirit.” By this He showed me, by making me know it interiorly, that our union must be a perfect one. And I always felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as vividly as that of the Word.

After Communion, our Lord said to me : “ The Holy Spirit will give to your soul quite another beauty.” I recalled these former words of Jesus, and reminded Him of them : “ By contact with My blessed Soul yours will gain quite another radiance ” ; and I knew now that this was to be the work of the Holy Spirit. In prayer our Lord said to me : “ You now possess the Holy Spirit with all His gifts and His fruits in a large measure. Because of this union, by the very fact of it, you will love the Word better.” This was said during my particular examen.

Yesterday, my Father, I said to you : “ God is carrying me in His Arms.” This is still

true, but now I can add : “ And I bear Him in my heart.”

Since the 21st, the day of the alliance with the Holy Spirit, I always enjoy the Presence of the Adorable Trinity. Sometimes I see the Divine Persons separately, sometimes together, to speak more clearly. I see God sometimes in His Unity of Nature, at other times in His Trinity of Persons.

When my thoughts turn to the Holy Spirit, they are immediately carried on, with the rapidity of lightning, to the Word and the Father, and my heart is enkindled with one and the same love for each of the Divine Persons. It seems as if They communicated to me a little of the reciprocal love which they have for Each Other. Oh, may the Holy Spirit inflame and enkindle me with His Divine Love ! When I tell our Lord of the ardent desire which I have to love Him, He answers : “ You have the flame of that love within you.” I have more than the flame. I have the very centre of the fire itself. This morning, after Communion, the Three Divine Persons were walking together in my soul. I saw Them, Each individually—holding

familiar converse among Themselves, if I may use the expression. By this intellectual vision, I gained an idea—very dim, it is true—of the Life of these Divine Persons, of Their joy and intimate happiness. Oh, may we all one day partake of this intimate life of God !

CHAPTER XX

THE DIVINE BEAUTY

I DESIRE that my soul should be in God, as a sponge in the sea. I was beginning the Rosary, while still contemplating God under the figure of a sheet of limpid water. When I reached the third chaplet, and was meditating on the Glorious Mysteries, I fervently implored the Holy Spirit to come into my soul, and suddenly I saw above this sheet of water a white Dove. What happiness I felt !

The feeling which fills my soul before any other is one of wonder. From that I pass to adoration, and thence to humility and gratitude. What does this Dove represent ? for it is but the figure of something else. It represents one of the Persons of the Adorable Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

What does it reveal to me ? The Infinite perfections. That God should thus show

Himself to a poor creature like me! The wonder I feel is very real, when I think that God hides and encloses Himself, so to speak, under so frail a disguise, in order to content His child's desire. He has revealed Himself to her heart. He has said: "It is I, the Holy Spirit, Whom you have so fervently desired . . . I come to dwell in you."

In such circumstances the soul expresses her sentiments by silence better than by words. For how could she find any words which would express to God all her wonder and gratitude? And her humility grows in proportion as she considers the great mystery more attentively. Her heart overflows with gratitude and tenderness for the Father Who has sent the Holy Spirit to her. "O beloved Father, I render thanks to Thee for that Thou hast heard and granted my desire."

I saw in my soul, as it were, a majestic river, which poured forth its waters quietly and tranquilly, yet with force. Striking image of this Divine Life which flows in our souls, and in which we can participate at every instant. Oh, happy communion with the Divine Nature, of which sacramental Com-

munion is but a means ! I would I could ceaselessly renew it. The Divine Life, then, appears to me at times as this majestic river ; at others, like a sheet of water, clear as crystal. Thus it was given me to contemplate the Divinity during a greater part of the afternoon and the whole evening. I heard these beautiful words : “ Lose yourself deep in God.” I never cease meditating upon them.

To lose myself in the infinite Greatness, I who am but nothingness ! In the infinite Sanctity, I who am nothing but sin ! In the infinite Power, I who am weakness itself ! In the infinite Goodness and Mercy, I who am all evil ! In the infinite Immutability, I who do nothing but change and waver in doing good ! In the infinite Science, I who know nothing ! In the infinite Light, I who am thick darkness ! In the infinite Love, I who am but coldness and ice in the service of God !

Mother Mary was in the Upper Room with the Apostles when they received the Holy Spirit, and I was praying to her when He came to me. “ Help me, O Mother, to keep this Divine Guest in my soul. I think you

have prayed for me while I was imploring Him to come ; pray still, dearest Mother, that I may never wound Him by the slightest voluntary fault !” May I also be like a dove in purity and simplicity.

I never receive anything for myself alone ; directly I am favoured with a grace, I ask of the good God that it may profit many other souls. While contemplating this sheet of water, perceiving and adoring in it the Infinite, I asked that a squall from Paradise might come to scatter these waters of the Divinity upon a multitude of souls. One is never the poorer for sharing with others the gifts of God—rather, I think, one is enriched—and it seems to me that the more one possesses God, the more one desires to give Him to others. Our desires are immense, and, what is very consoling to consider, we can honour the immensity of God by great and ardent desires. “ O my God ! do Thou excite holy desires in me, and grant that they may always produce fruits !” Oh, how good it is to be alone with God, or with someone who loves Him and speaks of Him ! I should wish never to have anything to think of but

Him; I desire only to listen to Him, and talk a little to Him. Sometimes I do nothing but slowly repeat again and again, "The good God." Sometimes Heaven opens, and I see Him. I saw Him thus, with the eyes of the mind, on New Year's Day, 1903; on last Thursday, the 15th of January; and several times since then. The first time, I saw the Eternal, the Almighty, the Infinite, seated upon a throne, radiant with glory. The Blessed Virgin, the Angels, and all the Saints, came to prostrate themselves before Him, to offer Him their homage, and the vows of holy souls on earth. The second time, I saw God as even more beautiful and desirable than the first time—if that were possible. Our Angel Guardians were surrounding Him and presenting to Him their offerings. I took my place among them, leaning upon the knees of the Divine Master, and there I have remained ever since.

During the funeral of Sister Saint Alcimus I entered, in spite of myself, into contemplation of the Infinite Being and His greatness. . . . The farther my interior gaze penetrated, the deeper it plunged into unfathomable

depths. I still gazed, and God appeared ever greater to me. These immeasurable grandeurs unfolded themselves unceasingly to my eyes, and I always seemed only at the starting-point. I could only perceive in the darkness one tiny point of the greatness, or rather the grandeurs, of the Infinite Being. I say, "in the darkness," for God hides Himself as if behind a thick veil. I see Him, and yet not clearly. I feel His Presence, and yet in no sensible manner. Thick darkness prevents my seeing Him, or feeling Him, and yet He is there, I am sure of it—as sure as one can be in this life. Oh, what beauty will burst upon our eyes, when this veil is removed!

It is three days since these things happened, and during that period, each time that my gaze has been drawn towards the Infinite, the same phenomenon has been reproduced. I penetrate constantly into fresh depths . . . and yet I am always at the beginning. . . . God is "that which can neither be said, nor thought."

I cannot express what I feel at the thought of His greatness; and yet . . . my soul is wrapped in deep shadow. The Saints have

called God, "The Divine Unknown." I love to call Him, "The Divine Incomprehensible."

See, as I write, I am entering into contemplation of this Infinite Being; and I would willingly lay down my pencil to do so more at my ease. Then I feel, too, that I can say nothing really about what I see and feel; that I cannot reveal these things. "And why should I reveal them, O my God? why should I try to tell them?"

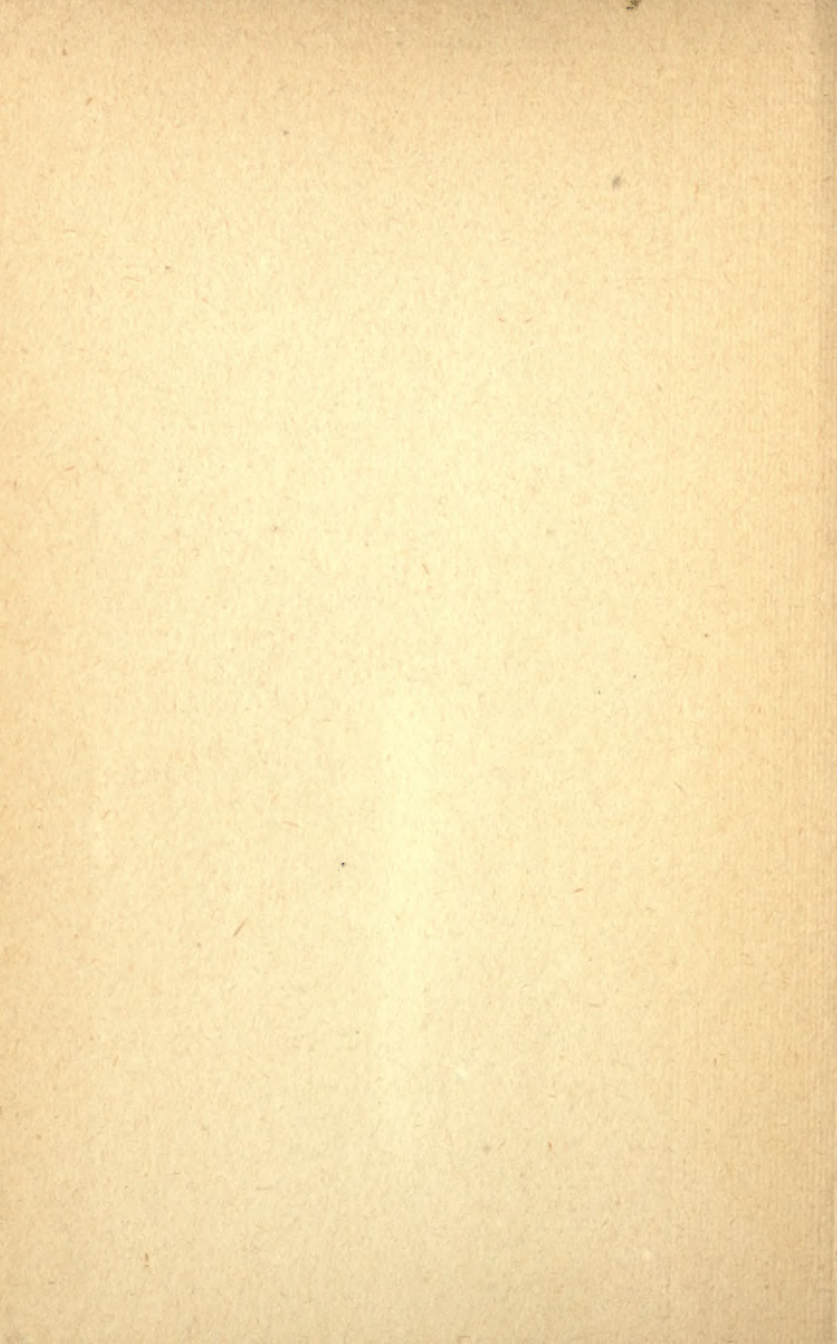
I was saying the Rosary in the Workroom Chapel, neither reading nor conversation had excited my imagination, when suddenly I saw a very bright and soft light; it was dazzling, and appeared through a black veil, which seemed to me very thick. This veil disappeared, and then, "O my God, Thou didst show me splendours which I am powerless to describe. All that so closely concerns Thee is felt, and sometimes seen, but can never be expressed." To speak in ordinary language: I saw a rather limited space, which appeared to be entirely filled with the purest, finest, most brilliant gold; upon it were reflected lights, of which no created light can give any idea. Although no sensible form showed itself, I

felt that in the bosom of these incomparable splendours reposed a Being, Infinitely Great, Infinitely Powerful, Infinitely Holy.

I knew this by the strong and sweet impressions of my soul; by the irresistible attraction I felt for Him Who is All; by something—I know not what—which took place between me and God; and by the firm resolutions with which He inspired me. I tried in vain to hide from this favour; I even did my best to close my bodily eyes, hoping thus to succeed in chasing away the illusion. It was all of no use; and this lasted some moments, long enough to recite a few *Aves*. “O my God, how beautiful Thou art!” I have spoken of *gold* and *light*, because these two things best express my thought; but neither the brilliancy of gold, nor the brightness of light are anything to compare with what I saw. I feel that everything I write scarcely approaches the truth. “But how, O my God, can I show forth such marvels? How can my feeble words express what Thou art? How could they tell in what fashion Thou didst show Thyself to me? And yet it was all but a pale reflection of that Eternal

Beauty which rejoices the Angels and Saints. What will It be like when I am allowed to contemplate It in all Its magnificence, if Thou dost permit me to do so, if Thou dost grant me that grace? In the midst of all these temptations, of all this anguish, through which Thou dost will that I should pass, I will always hope for it from Thy merciful goodness!"





62975

